METRO / A26
Ruffa, kids get police protection

WORLD / A27
Vatican stops financial aid to Amnesty International for its pro-abortion stance

BUSINESS / B1
Stocks hit highest level in 80 years

SPORTS / A29
Harbour Centre bags third straight PBL crown

ENTERTAINMENT / E2
Oh, those beautiful, troubled women up on billboards

GMA to media: Gov't to end killings, libel suits
By Juliet Labog-Javellana

IN A BID TO IMPROVE HER RELATIONSHIP WITH the media, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday promised to end the killing of journalists and protect them from libel suits and arbitrary arrest.

The President hosted a dialogue in Malacañang with representatives of local and foreign news organizations and told them she would

SPAN / A2

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Friday, June 15, 2007 | 64 | 72 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 187 / P10 | www.inquirer.net

AFP's 'bad boy' can now summon top brass
By Cherry Pie A. Gil and Christine Avendaño

Trillanes to probe AFP death squads

LAST FLIGHT OUT: Neighborhood kids say goodbye as the 50-ha Iloilo airport in Cabatuan, Iloilo, which ceased operations on Tuesday after 75 years of operations. It had seen off presidents, a Pope, dignitaries and beauty queens. The airport was transferred 10 km north of the city.

Old Iloilo airport sees last of happy landings

By Ma. Elena Lainez
and Marian P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—THE HISTORIC Iloilo airport, the launchpad-cum-arrival point of many of the country's leaders, ceased operations on Tuesday after 75 years of serving millions of passengers.

The old airport in Mandurriao district ended operations following the commercial opening on Wednesday of the new Iloilo International Airport in Santa Barbara and Cabatuan towns, 20 kilometers north of this city.

The last plane out of the old airport was a Manila-bound Cebu Pacific flight at 6:20 p.m. on Tues. day.

Built in 1937, the old airport is located 5.5 km from downtown. It was so conveniently accessible that taxis, pedicabs and tricycles could unload their passengers a few meters from its front door.

Annual passenger traffic at the old airport was estimated at 700,000 the last two years, making it the busiest domestic airport in the country.

The old airport was also fourth among the busiest airports in the country in terms of

FOR BUSINESS A18

Says special teams under control of intelligence

By Ty Zamora
and Christine O. Avendaño

NOW THAT HE HAS been elected senator, should the Armed Forces of the Philippines have anything to fear?

"They should not fear anything if they are doing their duties. ... I am not a vindictive person and I don't take things personally. I will only do what I should do," Antonio Trillanes IV, 35, told reporters yesterday.

But among the issues that the former Navy lieutenant plans to tackle in the Senate is one that could put him on a collision course with the AFP—the killing and forced disappearance of leftist activists.

In an earlier interview with the Inquirer at his detention center in Fort Bonifacio, Trillanes said he would call for a Senate inquiry to resolve the spate of political killings and forced disappearances that has continued unabated since President Macapagal-Arroyo took power in January 2001.

The human rights group Karapatan has listed 864 extrajudicial killings and 184 disappearances under the Arroyo administration.

But Trillanes, a 1995 graduate of the Philippine Military Academy, was emphatic about the ob-

TRILLANES A12

SENATOR-ELECT TRILLANES: The buoyant hopes, the confidence were there even 10 days ago when he held a presscon at Fort Bonifacio.

Ex-Navy officer makes history

By Nikko Dizon
and Jocelyn R. Uy

OAKWOOD MUTINY LEADER Antonio Trillanes IV has won a seat in the Senate, making history as the country's first former military officer to be elected any time while detained on coup d'etat charges.

Trillanes, a candidate of the Genuine Opposition (GO), the anti-Arroyo minority group led by ousted Vice President Teofisto del Rosario, is to be proclaimed the 13th in the winning slate of 12 senators this morning by the Commission on Elections sitting as the National Board of Canvassers (NBC).

"My belief is it is already mathematically impossible to overcome the lead of Trillanes, in view of which the board has decided to have a partial proclamation up to [Ben] Ejercito," Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. said before adjourning the NBC session at noon yesterday.

EX-NAVY A12

E-jeeps coming; 1st in Southeast Asia

By TJ Burgonio

THE JEEPNEY'S ELECTRIC POWERED VERsion will soon be weaving through the streets of Baguio City to pick up passengers.

A multinational group is importing two electric jeepneys (E-jeeps) from China this month in an effort to introduce a low-carbon but sustainable transport system to the city.

Once the E-jeep becomes viable, many of them will be shipped to Baguio for commercial operations. Who knows, this may be replicated in other cities across the country.

But the E-jeep is just the icing on the cake. The real magic lies in the fact that the jeep will be running on electricity produced by a renewable energy power plant from the city's market and household wastes.

Green Renewable Independent Power Providers Inc. (GRIPP) consortium of the 1-million euro (P61.66-million) project—the first in Southeast Asia—is further convinced

LIKE THE ORIGINAL, it is similar in design and its colors (but a rainbow would exist, the E-jeep is a 12-seater made of fiberglass. The big difference is that no way is it going to be a polluter.

ELECTRIC A2

Palace exec: Claudio, Puno et al. on way out

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE TWO CABINET MEMBERS who ran the administration's highly touted election machinery but failed to deliver the votes to its senatorial candidates in the May 14 balloting would be the first casualties of President Macapagal-Arroyo's housecleaning.

Presidential Adviser Gabriel Claudio and Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno should get the boot for failing to "line up or drive votes, ratiocinate" to base six to 10 senators elected, said a top Malacañang official, who requested anonymity so he was not authorized to speak on the matter.

Palace sources said another official likely to get the boot was Eliseo Quintana, chair of Philippine Amusements and Gaming Corp, a Puguo source said Gen. Alexander Yano, chief of the Philippine National Police, and Angelo Reyes, secretary of the environment and energy, are both safe.

The Malacañang official mentioned this, but added that Education Secretary Jesli Lapus was also under the hot seat for his mediocre scores in the Department of Education, particularly with the vote-

PALACE A2

SWS: 32% of Filipino adults expect quality of life to improve

ONE OF EVERY THREE FILipinos looks forward to a better quality of life, while optimism about the Philippine economy continues to improve, according to three surveys conducted by the Social Weather Stations early this year.

Still, very few Filipinos said their quality of life had improved from last year. SWS said in a statement yesterday.

SWS conducted surveys on the quality of life and economic optimism in February, March and April.

The United Nations defines quality of life to include aspects such as employment, income distribution, education, social protection, food security, health, housing, public safety, national security, environment, recreation and human rights.

"How quality of life is perceived and how much progress is achieved reflects economic and values, choices and conditions, and the complexities of the economics and politics governing societies," the United Nations said.

Asked the question, "In your opinion, what will be the quality of your life in the coming 12 months?" one in three Filipinos (between 30 and 32 percent) said that he or she expected his or her personal quality of life to improve.

Ten to 13 percent said their lives would take a turn for the worse, resulting in a net optimism of plus 17 to plus 20, the surveys showed.

In some areas, net personal optimism ranged from plus 25 to plus 33 in Metro Manila, plus 15 to plus 23 in Luzon outside Metro Manila, plus 39 in Mindanao, and plus 13 to plus 17 in the Visayas.

Personal optimism was plus 9 to plus 11 among members of Classes ABC (the middle and upper classes), plus 17 to plus 20 among members of Class D and plus 14 to plus 23 among those in Class E.

"Optimism regarding one's personal quality of life continues to climb dramatically," SWS said.

"Only in March 2000 [did pres-

SWS A2

FRIDAY, JUNE 15, 2007

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FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

ESTRADA: Love no longer

If Erap walks, that's it for us, says prosecutor

By Veli Corrales

FIVE PROSECUTORS HAVE CALLED FOR oral arguments during final arguments today in the six-year plunder trial of deposed President Joseph Estrada.

They are doing so not just to snap Justice delays in the case but also to "rebuild the people's memory," explained Special State Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio.

Villa-Ignacio roused class and consternation when he called the "last opportunity" of Philippine courts, but that his team believed making the proceedings public would remind Filipinos of the alleged crimes of their 13th President.

"It's been six years since we began and the people might have already forgotten the details of this case," he said in an interview.

State prosecutors plan to argue that a guilty verdict for Estrada, who is accused of amassing P4.2 billion in illegal funds, would be a rare chance for the Philippines to hold the powerful to account.

"It would show that the state, and the administration as well, have the political will to go after corrupt public officials," Villa-Ignacio said.

"If we let this go unpunished, then that's it. Forget about good governance, forget about establishing institutions in the bureaucracy. This is the last opportunity that we as a nation have to show that we can enforce the law regardless of the personalities involved here," he said.

Prosecutors also plan to pore on the Ombudsman's exclusive three-fifth page statement, now running up the "people's case" against Estrada.

In it, they lamented the failure to obtain "a swift and timely justice" for the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos and his cronies.

Estrada's conviction may provide "a second chance," they said.

The Sandiganbayan special division, created to hear the plunder case against the disgraced leader, received the prosecution's memo as well as a 276-page summation of the defense last Wednesday. The trial will close with final arguments at 9 a.m. today.

Whole-day affair

The court has required the presence of the 70-year-old Estrada as when is expected to be a whole-day affair. He co-accused son, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, is said to be in San Francisco, California, and is not expected at the hearing.

Lawyers from both camps are expected to come in full force, with the sheriff's office reserving up to 20 seats for each side. Loud speakers are to be installed outside the 3rd-floor courtroom for journalists who could not be accommodated inside.

Reached at his Tanay hilltop vacation estate where he is under house arrest, Estrada said he will be ready to address the court himself, if allowed to do so.

"I would have been in exile and not attending if I were guilty," he said, recalling how then Justice Secretary Hernando Perez allegedly advised him safe passage to any country of his choice shortly after his ouster in January 2001.

Villa-Ignacio, who has many times accused the Estrada defense panel of delaying the case, said the prosecution has "no other document further amongst" to prolong the case.

He said that in most cases after the trial proper, the prosecution and defense would just agree to file memos and rejoinders, after which the court considers the case submitted for decision.

But if the prosecution had agreed in this case, the long wait for the verdict "might drag on until 2008."

Oral summation hearing

Sandiganbayan spokesperson Ronnie Ilocso, who has served in the antigraft court since 1979, observed that this was the first time that the court would be holding an oral summation hearing.

Under the rules of court, the special division has to issue a verdict "within 90 days" starting today, when the case is considered submitted for decision.

Villa-Ignacio said he expected a verdict within 60 days.

"We are very confident, especially after we have presented our evidence," he said.

The Philippine National Police said it was ready to bring Estrada before the Sandiganbayan today or what will probably be his last court appearance.

Chief Supt. Romeo Olivarez, chief of the PNP's Police Security and Protection Office (PSPO), said that if Estrada refuses to appear before the court, he would be brought there by force.

"But I already talked to him and he had agreed to go," Olivarez said.

Olivarez said his office had been ordered to "produce" Estrada before the Sandiganbayan before 9 a.m.

He refused to say how many policemen would be involved or whether Estrada would be transported by chopper or by land.

"There is no specific threat to Mr. Estrada," Olivarez noted.

Olivarez's unit, with around 2,000 members, is in charge of security for very important persons (VIPs). With Alexis Pupo and AP

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THE LANDMARK

A YOUNG relative of Marilou Ranario joins a Migrante rally for the Filipina who is facing execution in Kuwait for murder (INQUIRER)

35 Pinoys languishing in Death Row

By Cynthia D. Balana

AT LEAST 35 OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS (OFWs) in at least five countries are facing execution for various offenses, prompting the Department of Foreign Affairs to alert its overseas offices and to provide legal assistance to them, Foreign Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Affairs Jovito Palma said yesterday.

The DFA move followed the beheading Wednesday of Filipino worker Reynaldo Cortez, 43, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia for the murder of a Pakistani contractor who tried to rape him in 2003.

Cortez was told the DFA was saddened by the beheading of Cortez which was carried out despite repeated offers of "blood money" to the family of the Pakistani victim.

Cortez said that when he assumed office in January 2006, there were only 24 potential death penalty cases involving OFWs all over the world.

He said that through consistent monitoring and legal assistance provided by the embassies abroad, 11 of these cases were commuted or reduced to life imprisonment.

But the number has increased to 35 because of new cases, most of which are on the trial stage, on appeal and pending before the Supreme Court of the concerned countries.

"These 35 potential death penalty cases are now being monitored by the embassies to make sure that the OFWs concerned are being given correct legal advice and enough assistance," Cortez said.

Cortez said his office had been receiving appeals for intervention assistance from the families and relatives of the 35 OFWs working in Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Kuwait, China and Brunei.

He said the cases in China and Malaysia could be different as they involve those involved illegal drugs.

"But we will never allow these to commence down or at least minimize their sentences. We are strictly monitoring these cases," Cortez assured.

Coast Guard: No trace of burned ship

By Leila B. Salaverria

NO TRACE OF THE MV EMILIO 888 have been found four days after it was razed by a fire that forced to more than 200 passengers to evacuate the vessel off Mindoro on Sunday morning, a Philippine Coast Guard official said.

PCG operations chief Rear Admiral Wilfredo Tamayo said parts of the vessel, if any, could be found, could be used in the investigation of the cause of the blaze that left five people dead and several others wounded.

But Tamayo said PCG operatives have been holding search and rescue operations since Sunday, and the PCG Caraballo Dimension here.

He noted that based on estimated accounts, the fire that hit the wooden-hulled passenger and cargo vessel quickly spread through it.

"Since the fire spread quickly, most of the ship could just be ashes now," he said yesterday.

He also said although in salvage any part of the ship would be impressed, if not both, considering that it took 1,200 [illegible] days [illegible].

Tamayo also said the PCG called off the search and rescue operations yesterday considering that it has no received any report of missing persons from the MV Cavalry 8.

The PCG kept up the search for four days just in case there were still people who needed to be rescued.

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Correction

IN THE ARTICLE "Estrada" column on Page B2 of the Business section, "Estrada" should be corrected to "Estrada."

Pinoy aid worker shot in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO, SRI LANKA—A Filipino member of the International aid group Mercy Corps was shot in the head in eastern Sri Lanka, a spokesperson for the group said Thursday.

The shooting took place Wednesday night in the province of Trincomalee in the restive east, said Irene Davey, Mercy Corps's director of programs and deputy country director.

The man, identified as Antonio Villanueva, was conscious and in stable condition, said Pushpa Sanjeewa, spokesperson for Colombo's National Hospital, where the man was being treated. Sanjeewa confirmed his nationality and said he was doing well.

Villanueva was in Trincomalee working on a post-tsunami relief project. He was shot under unclear circumstances on the beach in front of this hotel.

Shot on the beach

"One of our international staffers was shot on the beach near the Chivalcazar hotel," Davey said.

Davey said it was too early to say whether the man was targeted or caught in crossfire, and she declined to speculate on who was behind the shooting.

The military confirmed the shooting and said police were investigating. There was no immediate comment from Tamil Tiger rebels who are fighting security forces in the east and north of the country.

The shooting comes two weeks after two Sri Lankan Red Cross volunteers were abducted from a Colombo train station and shot dead.

Mercy Corps has worked in Sri Lanka since January 2005 during largely post-tsunami relief work. The group, which works in countries all around the world, has head quarters in the United States, Scotland and Hong Kong.

Decades of discrimination

Violence has spiked recently on the Indian Ocean island, claiming more than 1,000 lives in the past 18 months, despite a 2002 ceasefire and multiple attempts by European and Japanese envoys to persuade the government and rebels to resume peace talks.

The Tamil Tiger began fighting in 1983 for a separate homeland for Sri Lanka's 3.1 million minority Tamils in the north and east, ending decades of discrimination by successive Sinhalese majority governments.

In August 2006, 17 local employees of the international aid group Action Against Hunger were killed as rebels and security forces battled for control of the eastern seaside town of Muttur. There have been no arrests in the case. AP, AFP

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GMA accepts resignation of press usec

CHANGES ARE afoot at the Office of the Press Secretary following the resignation of Press Undersecretary Isabel de Leon yesterday.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said he designated Press Assistant Secretary Jose "Jimmy" Capadocia to take over the functions of De Leon who was undersecretary for media relations.

President Macapagal-Arroyo accepted the resignation of De Leon, who had served her for six years. "I will miss you," the President told Dr. Leon when she saw her during the government-media dialogue session the following day.

Rebuilding family

Dr. Leon cited the need to rebuild her family as the reason for her resignation. She needed her position for the chance to reunite her family in the United States.

Dr. Leon was a reporter for Manila Bulletin, covering Mr. Arroyo when she was still Vice President. Before Ms. Arroyo asked her to work for her in June 2001, initially as presidential assistant and assistant secretary. A journalism graduate of the University of Sto. Tomas where she subsequently taught, Dr. Leon was promoted to undersecretary on Aug. 15, 2006.

In a letter to Ms Arroyo, Dr. Leon recalled the President's advice to her during their trip to Johannesburg on October 2000.

"While our children are young, we should devote our time to them," she recalled Ms Arroyo as telling her.

"I devoted 18 years of my life to the Manila Bulletin as a political writer, some years in government service under your administration. During all those years it hurts me to admit that I have been remiss in my duties as a mother to my eldest child," De Leon said.

Dr. Leon said they would try to "rebuild our lives" in the US.

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Gilbert Chevalier

Ping seeks revival of Jose Pidal probe

By Evan Paz Ranjo

REP. RODOLFO BIAZON (NETTEDAY PRO-posed the creation of an independent commission to investigate acting officers of the Commission on Elections (Comelec) during the 2004 and 2007 elections.

Biazon, who led the Senate investigation into the so-called "Hello Garci" scandal that tainted the 2004 presidential election, felt the Comelec can not conduct an impartial investigation of its own men.

Back in 2005, Comelec Chief Benjamin Abalos did not order an investigation of then commissioners Virgilio Garcillano and other Comelec officers implicated in the "Hello Garci" wiretapping scandal.

The latest purported wiretapped phone conversations between President Macapagal-Arroyo and Garcillano during the canvassing of votes in 2004 showing the President's margin of one million votes over the late movie star Fernando Poe Jr.

"I am supporting the call of Comelec Commissioner [Romeo] Brawner for a [presidential] investigation," Biazon said in a press conference yesterday at the Manila Polo Club with Genuine Opposition coalition officials and election watchdog groups.

"I think the support is and of legislation is already decent. We have enough information to prosecute, to pursue legislation. Now is the time to prosecute those being validated by respondents officials of the Comelec," added the former military chief.

According to Biazon, had the Comelec taken action on the officers implicated in the "Hello Garci" controversy, there would have been no more questions of election fraud in the recently concluded May 14 and no to elections.

"There's a ray of hope, since we have no less than a commissioner himself who has voiced the sentiment. So I am still sweaty to support the commission of Romeo Brawner," he said.

Biazon's idea is the formation of another commission like those of the Feliciano and Bernas Commissions, that were both appointed by Malacañang.

The Feliciano Commission investigated the July 2003 Oakwood mutiny while the more recent Bernas Commission investigated the rising of rebel soldiers dubbing Manuel as the mastermind.

But it should also include representatives of poll watchdog groups like the Catholic Church-based Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) and the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel).

"Because they have the pulse of voters' of election fraud, he added.

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13 opposition senators to hold secret balloting

By Gil C. Cabunoguan Jr.

AT LEAST 13 OPPOSITION AND independent senators, representing the majority in the chamber, will hold a secret balloting next week to decide who among them should assume the Senate presidency in the 14th Congress.

This was revealed yesterday by Sen. Pimilla Lacson who said the opposition bloc would be assisted in picking a leader only so majority bloc, saw who would give priority to their own when it comes to committee membership.

"We have a clear majority and we should not leave the opposition and independent unprotected groups only to their members in the minority. We have agreed to stick together as opposition members," Lacson said in the Kapihan sa Senado.

He said the Senate presidency was at least one between the incumbent Manuel Villar and Minority Leader Aquilino "Nene" Pimentel Jr.

"We have our own preferences but we will put it to executive balloting so that we can avoid [with] all of us agreed to respect the results of the balloting," Lacson said.

Backbiting

He, however, admitted the secret balloting may mean to prolong any "bad feelings" that might arise from the session for the Senate presidency.

To keep their commitments binding, Lacson said the group agreed "not to talk" to any senator who breaks his word for the sake there is no room to keep the members of the bloc from changing their minds when the heated voting begins on the Senate floor.

Lacson said the opposition bloc had agreed to be unified at least up to October or December this year.

"After the opening of Congress on July 23[,] we have to continue to talk to keep the bloc united. We all know that the longer we are together, the better it would be for the opposition," he said.

"By the way, Nene and Villar are not bound by the agreement because they were not present in the caucus," he said.

No term sharing

Lacson said the group had also rejected a term-sharing between the candidates because "it would be a sign of weakness and compromise."

The opposition bloc has not four votes and no ranks are expected to enroll in the opening of Congress next.

The bloc will initially be made up of the eight winning candidates of the Genuine Opposition coalition: Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel Jr. (re-elected) and three regional opposition senators—Miguel Zubiri, Juan Ponce Enrile and Francis Escudero.

Lacson said the opposition is also planning a third "expansion" that would bring substantial new senators to their side especially the anti-administration "unlocked-to-bring pocket."

Aside from no side deals with Malacañang and its allies in the Senate, he said the opposition group also wished to give priority to their members in the assignment of committee chairmanships, with the remaining committees left to the administration.

"All of us submitted three committees each—our priority and the rest on each of us—that we would want to head. As an opposition-dominated Senate, it is but right that we be given first crack at the committees of our choice," he said.

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MAGUINDANAO POLLS

2 witnesses to fraud abducted in Cebu

By Charlie Señase, Edwin Fernandez and Agabin Zonio
Inquirer Mindanao

CITIZENS CITY—TWO PUBLIC school teachers from Maguindanao who were on their way to Manila to testify on election fraud in the province were abducted by unidentified armed men while they were in Cebu City, a co-ordinator for the opposition in Mindanao said yesterday.

Raul de la Torre of the Partido ng Bisaya Pilipino (PBP) in Zamboanga del Sur said he was escorting Fatima Sidlungang and Bantilan Sindonda, who had served as election inspectors in South Upi, Maguindanao, to Manila when the two were seized by six men as their ship docked in Cebu early this week.

"By the time we have no information on their whereabouts," De la Torre said.

He said he reported the incident to the Cebu police before returning to Pagadian City, where he is based.

Chief Supt. Joel Goltiao, police chief of the autonomous region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) of which Maguindanao is a part, said they were investigating De la Torre's claim.

But a check with the school district supervisor's office in South Upi showed there had been no report of missing teachers. Education officials in the town doubted two teachers by the names of Fatima Sidlungang and Bantilan Sindonda worked there.

De la Torre said three South Upi teachers had agreed to go with him to Manila as witness on the alleged fraud before the Comelec.

"But one of them returned home after threats to him and their town mayor allegedly surfaced," he said.

He said the mayor was identified as Datu Pax Mangudadatu.

De la Torre said he and the two other teachers took a boat to Manila after the money promised by two opposition senators for their plane fare was delayed.

Chiefs of Staff visited the polls in Maguindanao with Team Unity's 12 senatorial candidates except the one-term senator in the province and some teachers, who served as poll inspectors, claimed no elections took place but that armed men filled out the ballots in favor of the administration slate.

Labor chief urges ILO to reject KMU complaint

By Jovanse Aning

LABOR SECRETARY ARTURO BRION on Wednesday asked the International Labor Organization to dismiss the complaints filed against the government by the militant labor group Kilusang Mayo Uno for the killing of unionists and labor rights violations.

Speaking before the 90th International Labor Conference hosted by the ILO in Geneva, Switzerland, Brion described the cases as "premature skirmishes by complainants who had not exhausted their remedies in the local forum and who were simply engaged in forum shopping and other strategic designs."

The ILO conference is the latest international forum to attack the Estrada administration has been forced to defend itself against accusations of perpetrating and tolerating extrajudicial killings and human rights violations.

The complaints, filed by KMU in October last year, are being heard by the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association chaired by the Netherlands. The committee had asked the Philippine government to reply to the allegations.

Brion said the government could only hope that the committee would be "very discerning in giving due course to the complaints and appreciating the explanations given."

He said that by going to the ILO and refusing to cooperate with Philippine authorities, the complainants "have given the impression that they simply wanted to use the committee as a press forum and score easy points for the consumption of the media."

BRION

Brion said he hoped the "perceived problems and deficiencies" of the Philippines shall be evaluated by the committee "in the context of a country's unique circumstances, degree of development, history and track record."

"As a rule, faithful members of the ILO would welcome and encourage, not condemnation, if indeed there are deficiencies," he told the delegates.

In its complaint, the KMU blamed the Arroyo administration for the killing of 84 trade unionists since 2000 and a slew of labor rights violations such as the abduction, illegal arrest, and military and police harassment of workers and labor rights groups.

All those violated ILO Conventions 87 and 98 on freedom of association and the right to organize, collective bargaining, which the Philippines ratified in 1953, the KMU said.

"If these are not stopped, it will dramatically weaken the country's trade union movement," the KMU said in its complaint.

The KMU cited the murder of investigators coordinated by local and international groups such as the Center for Trade Union and Human Rights and the International Labor Solidarity Movement.

Most of those killed were members of the KMU and its affiliates. Prominent among them were the recent murders of Eufemia Cullamat in Tarlac, which is owned by the Cojuangco family of which former President Corazon Aquino is a part, who was killed during a strike dispersal by the military on Nov. 15, 2000, the KMU said.

The militant labor group also said there had been 10 cases of abduction and forced disappearance victimizing 11 unionists and union supporters between Jan. 20, 2001 and June 30, 2000.

The Arroyo administration, the KMU charged, was implementing a cheap and docile labor policy to attract foreign investments at the expense of workers.

"We believe this is part of a deliberate policy of the Arroyo [administration] to prevent the workers from organizing their rights and fight for better wages and working conditions. We hope that through international pressure we can stop the violations of workers' and human rights and expose [Mrs] Arroyo's false and fake human rights concerns," the KMU said.

The group noted the ILO should send a fact-finding team to the Philippines to look into its complaints.

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PNP doctor who killed superior officer dismissed

A POLICE DOCTOR who shot and killed his superior and injured several others inside Camp Crame last November has been dismissed by the Philippine National Police (PNP).

The dismissal of Chief Insp. Renato Rotaquio has been approved by PNP Chief Director General Oscar Calderon, according to Director Usury Taringa, Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management chief.

Rotaquio was a member of the PNP Health Service.

Senior police fourmary Hearing Officer investigating the administrative case filed against Rotaquio found him guilty of grave misconduct. But, a charge punishable by dismissal from the police force, all Rotaquio's benefits have also been forfeited.

The dismissal of Rotaquio will not affect the criminal case of murder and frustrated murder filed against the suspect.

In the late hours of Nov. 23, 2006, Rotaquio entered the PNP Multi-Purpose Hall and fired at his superior Chief Superintendent Isidoro Ramonian, killing him instantly. The PNP Health Service was celebrating its anniversary

Palace exec: Claudio, Puno et al. ...

From page A1

pieces of unverified rumors.

The official told the Inquirer that Puno, in front of the local government department, and Claudio, as the President's inspector general adviser, were given a "free hand to set up the anti-corruption machinery but did not deliver."

He said "billions of pesos" were spent during the campaign at the Administration's fiats. Sixty (TEA) had signed memorandum orders up to the winning circle of 12. "But captains who President throws to sniper, and we die decide to revamp the whole Cabinet," the official said.

Don't blame Ermita

"Why should Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita be blamed for their failures?" said the official, referring to an earlier report that Ermita would be sacked. The radio was not given a "promotional role" in the 90 day anti-corruption drive but was busy with his ex- Khevin's vice gubernatorial candidacy in Batangas.

The source added that Ermita is not to blame for the Police doing administrative things," said the official. Puno and Claudio were "not to

From page A1

take up their recommendation to hire a special prosecution team to handle media killings.

She also agreed to update a 1999 report on media killings, saying existing statistics of some of the journalists being killed cluttered would first notify the National Press Club and the media organization concerned.

The President, who had not been accessible to the media, refused to meet with journalists every three months.

Mike A's libel case

Mr. Arroyo's husband had filed a slew of libel cases against more than 40 journalists for reports linking him to smuggling and other scandals. The president's second-hour car like after highly risky open heart surgery in April, Jose Miguel Arroyo announced he had asked his lawyers to drop all the libel cases. Has relaxed down in Mexico, Pasig, RIP.

The National Union of Journalists of the Philippines, which has been critical of the drive, admonished him, was not invited to the Malacañang gathering.

The President said she called the meeting to "review our efforts

From page A1

to prosecute and prevent journalist killings."

"Bits of ill...let me once again deplore the killings of journalists. We have a sorry history in our nation for political violence. We aim to break this vicious cycle of violence and be rid," the Arroyo said in the dialogue held at the Aguinaldo State Dining Room.

"I happen to believe that the greatest of military and police arms and weapons are good, understanding and loyal citizens fighting to protect our country everyday. But if rogue members of police and military are involved in the killings, they shall be punished," she said.

The President reiterated the steps she had taken to address the killings, including the creation of a presidential task force headed by Supreme Court Justice Jose Melo.

"We're in the process of following up its recommendations. The inquiries, special courts, its rogue witness protection measures, more manpower for prosecutors, and investigation of Left and Right killings to bring the perpetrators of these crimes to justice," she said.

Stop all violence

"As we have made tough choices to turn around our economy, we will also get a handle on these killings to end them once and for all. Today, let us join hands in mutual trust and common purpose so that all the violence will be stopped," the Arroyo said.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye denied the dialogue had some thing to do with the arrest on June 10 for a 10-day visit of six human rights experts from the European Union to look into the government's efforts to stop the killings of journalists and activists.

Fifty-one journalists have been killed since Ms Arroyo became president in 1986. Human rights groups say more than 800 individuals have been killed since 2001 in unexplained circumstances (the Inquirer count is 196).

Solicitor General Alicia Mac-Donald told reporters in a separate briefing the visit was a response to a Philippine request for assistance to the establishment of special courts, training of judges and prosecutors, and strengthening the witness protection program and improving forensic skills.

Brainstorming

Ms Arroyo, who left in the middle of the dialogue so that the participants would be "candid" with each other, had her security officials face the media in a "brainstorming" and asked them to come up with a consensus on steps to be taken to address the killings.

The officials included Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, Philippine Ambassador to Japan Bernardo Torres, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu, Philippine National Police Director Gen. Arturo Lomibao, Task Force Usig chief Gerry Bulaca and Interior Undersecretary Melchor Rosales.

The different media organizations were represented by Inquirer.net president Jose Ma. Nolasco, Philippine Press Institute president Butch Cuneta and their Jim Nieves, National Press Club president Rina Mallonca and Jerry Esplanada, Philippine Journalists Inc. (Pji) president Bernardo Fernandez, Philippine Correspondents Association of the Philippines president Manny Mogato and vice president Raul Wong, Radio Mindanao Network president Rudy Romero and vice president Ella Gonzales, Defense Press Corps president Rebecca Santos and vice president Ace Ruiz, and Philippine National Police Press Corps president Alex Magno. With a report from Cynthia D. Balana

GMA to media: Gov't to end killings, libel suits

Electric jeeps coming; first in Southeast Asia

From page B1

Rogen Dividend's move to go for clean energy for five years ago.

CREPP is the latest network of civil society groups, business associations and government units to back the construction of coal plants in the province and the island.

Logical choice

The province got its power mainly from geothermal energy. That's why Batelec II is the most logical choice for the pilot testing.

"The concept goes out of a dream to complete the clean energy campaign in Negros. We thought it a thing to complete that by adding a transport component," Alfonso Ronquillo Bolisay, founding member of CREPP, said.

The idea, eventually, is to have a fleet of 50 E-jeeps plying the

From page B1

secondary routes, or those streets not covered by the 4,000 to 5,000 locally made jeepneys.

After getting 500,000 votes (910-16 million) for the entire Bicol from the Dutch institution Novem, Bolisay said they hope to win 6,000 votes (937,280) each from Leagang Electric Multi-Purpose Cooperative.

E-plans to win six E-jeeps for the initial tests from there to see if the concept is viable. "We don't have a clear idea how well the operation runs, CREPP will get (an) full commercial operation by July next year.

The driver is that he three to five years. They can recover the first two cost in 10, and renewed. In 100, so we can break 10 percent of the market," said Bolisay, also Greenpeace climate and energy campaigner. Greenpeace is part of CREPP.

Down a usually a partner in the project.

"The more economically viable or successful the project is the more the [Dutch group] will support it. In fact, (Down) is even willing to increase the replacement of the project in other cities," Ballesteros said.

Batteries, colorful designs

Unlike the usually jeeps that ride on diesel, the E-jeeps are made of fiberglass, and can seat only 12, including the driver. They will carry batteries that will be charged for eight hours daily to give them power to cover 80 to 100 km.

But like the iconic jeepneys, they'll be carrying colorful designs on their bodies.

As currently practiced, CREPP will ask investors to invest a portion of the daily earnings of the "founding" the fund amount that drivers want to the jeepney owners out of their earnings or day's end.

CREPP will use the money to fund its own operations.

While on fuel and maintenance costs, drivers of E-jeeps are expected to bring home bigger incomes each day.

A jeepney driver earns an average of P 1,000 daily. But after paying for the gas, and assuming the "boundary" to the garage, he ends up with a take-home pay of P247.52 a day.

"If the E-jeep driver saves a breakfast of P100 to P200 a day on his fuel expenses, he can bring home the rest, then his earnings will be four times what he's earning now. And he's not that exhausted," Ballesteros said.

The E-jeep drivers will charge the standard fare approved by local transportation officials.

Power plant

Beyond the E-jeep, the most crucial component of the project is the setting up of a power plant consisting of a generator, a high solid waste-to-digester, and gasifier on a piece of land to be provided by the city government.

Here, organic wastes collected by the city government will be converted into methane gas and coal markets will be mapped into digesters, where they will be "solidified" and converted into gas. The gas, in turn, will be fed into a generator that will produce the electricity.

"When we thought of the project it's to correct we had the environment in mind. Global change, and solving air pollution are issues of our primary concerns," Bolisay said.

"With this project, you can reduce both. If you have battery, cleaner air. In a city like Bacolod, you also reduce the waste and you have more savings in the long run," he said.

Savings aside, Ballesteros said, could substantial fund the city's other priorities, such as infrastructure, education and governance.

CREPP hopes to enter into a joint venture with another partner to set up and operate the power plant.

Charging stations

Essentially, it has to establish a depot that will serve as a charging station and maintenance center. The project's third component. But that is not cost free.

The E-jeep drivers' fuel expenditures will be charged to a fund which CREPP wouldn't mind if a city government copies the concept, or the manufacturer of the fuel, jeepney makes its own E-jeep.

"Our hope is to replicate it to other cities in the Philippines and even in other parts of Asia," Ballesteros said. "The goal here is to show that it works in a place like Bacolod."

Noel Benton Bigtas, PT, DPT has successfully completed the postprofessional doctorate in physical therapy from Boston University Sargent College of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences. He was recognized for his participation in the Leadership Development Program. He was also selected to the Manager of Rehabilitation Services for Beth Israel/Deaconess Care Management (BIDCare) Hyper Mandarin Program. Prior to his graduation, he also served as Clinical Therapist for the same organization for almost 6 years. GCBI is a not-for-profit health care organization providing a full range of continuing services to the Greater Boston and New York metropolitan area. His doctorate was partly funded by a HRSA/BHC New York Division and the financial and moral support of his mentor, Flor-Ann Wood Ramos-Bigtas who is also an alumnus of Boston University (Master of Science in Physical Therapy, 1997). She completed her degree in physical therapy from Polytechnic Agricultural College in Manila in 1995. She is also a graduate of the Ateneo Law School. For more information, e-mail her at: MBigtas@bridgeline.org

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THE NEW ILOILO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT: Inaugurated by President Arroyo on Wednesday, the new airport is in Sto. Barbara-Cabatuan in Mandurriao district, 20 km north of Iloilo City

Old Iloilo airport sees last of happy landings

From page A1

passengers and cargo traffic, after the top three international airports—Ninoy Aquino International Airport, Mactan-Cebu International Airport and Davao International Airport.

In Western Visayas, the Iloilo airport had served the biggest number of passengers since 2000. Bustled was scored with 560,000 passengers and Caticlan (Aklan) with 420,000.

The growing passenger traffic and the limited facilities at the Mandurriao airport were among the reasons a new airport had to be built.

Seeing Iloilo's gateway to the rest of the country, it received and sent off presidents, popes, dignitaries and beauty queens. It also has a place in the nation's history.

History

Historian Ben Ildefonso notes that the late Lt. Col. Carlos P. Romulo, who later became a brigadier general and president of the United Nations General Assembly, landed at the Mandurriao airfield on his way to Australia during World War II.

Gen. Douglas MacArthur's orders, Romulo took off by twin-fuselage aircraft under heavy Japanese bombardment aboard a US Navy PBY patrol plane just after midnight on April 9, 1942. It reached Iloilo airport at dawn.

Voice of Freedom

Ildefonso said that while taking their breakfast at the airport restaurant, Romulo and his pilot, 1st Air Force Lt. Roland Barnick, simultaneously wept upon hearing the full of Hirohito broadcast over the "Voice of Freedom."

Romulo flew to Mindanao the following day on another plane.

In December 1944, the Iloilo airfield came under heavy bombardment from B-24s of the American forces.

For sale

The US because property where the old airport stands will be sold through public bidding.

A bidding took place early in May but the Department of Finance declared it a failure because only one offered was below the P1.2 billion set by the government.

The bidders were SM Prime Holdings, Ayala Land Land Holdings and Robinson's Land Corp.

Ms Arroyo leads Tupas, Drilon

In Cabatuan, Iloilo, President Macapagal-Arroyo landed on Wednesday a political adversary for his role in the construction of the new 500-hectare airport.

During the airport's inauguration rites, the President credited Iloilo Gov. Niel Tupas Sr. with the realization of the new Iloilo International Airport.

"Governor Tupas, congratulations. If [former] Gov. [Arthur] Defensor remembered the airport, you gave birth to this airport," Ms Arroyo said.

Before the President spoke, Tupas acknowledged Drilon's contribution to make the P6.76-billion airport a reality.

"The chief architect of this project, Sen. Franklin Drilon, would not join us in this glorious moment but we also convey to him our heartfelt thanks for daring to dream big dreams for Iloilo," he said.

The governor also expressed his gratitude to the President.

Ms Arroyo recognized Drilon for helping the government increase its revenue when he was Senate President.

Iloilo City Mayor Jerry Treñas, president of the League of Cities of the Philippines and one of Ms Arroyo's staunchest allies, said the President's words "clearly showed that she is extending her hand in friendship for the sake of economic development."

"Her message was clear: Let us forget about politics because the elections are over. Let us focus on real agenda which is to push for economic development," said Treñas.

Asked to comment on the President's acknowledgment of Drilon and Tupas, Archie Secretary Raul Gonzalez said, "So what?"

"Do you expect her to talk about the opposition, [considered by Tupas]?" said Gonzalez, a former Iloilo City congressman.

He said the President merely acknowledged all the people who contributed to the construction of the airport.

Contentious parties together

Ms Arroyo maintained that politics was not hampering the country's economic performance.

"The path we have set for economic reforms has not been upset by partisan rhetoric, and if you want proof of that statement, just look at the ones who are on the platform today. Some different contending parties in the last elections, we are all together for the future of Iloilo and Panay Island," she said.

Tupas was seated beside Ms Arroyo as the pre-departure area where the program was held. Also present were the President's allies—Iloilo Representatives Judy Tupas and Defensor, Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza and Gonzalez.

"Our airport is now open to you; let us now all focus [our efforts] so that our economy will further grow," the President said in Hiligaynon.

Ex-allies

Drilon and Tupas were the President's allies up to July 2005 when they broke ties with her administration and sided for her resignation.

Tupas has blamed the administration for the Jan. 17 assault on the Iloilo provincial capitol. Heavily armed policemen had tried to enforce a dismissal order by the Ombudsman against the governor and two provincial board members for graft.

Tupas defeated the administration candidate, Vice Gov. Rolando Alimada, by a margin of 208,000 votes.

SWS: 32% of Filipino adults expect quality of life to improve

From page A1

movement), March 2006 (the Iraq war), September/October 2006 ("Hamletgate"), and early 2004 (post-Angelo assassination) dichotomies dominate," it said.

Net optimism about the country's economy was plus 41 in April, where 41 percent said they thought the economy would be better in the next 12 months.

Net optimism about the economy was minus 23 in March last year. The figure has been steadily improving since. It was minus 8 last September, minus 2 in November and plus 1 in February this year.

"Compared to the third and fourth quarters of 2006, net economic optimism points in early 2007 improved in all areas," SWS said.

Among members of Class ABC, net optimism jumped from minus 6 to plus 6, while it was between minus 4 and plus 7 in Class D, and between minus 1 and plus 2 in Class E.

Losers outnumber gainers

Asked to compare their quality of life in early 2007 to how it was a year ago, 39 percent who said their lives were "worse now" (losers) outnumbered those who claimed their lives had improved (gainers).

Thirty-five percent to 43 percent of respondents said their lives were worse than 12 months ago, while only 16 to 18 percent said their lives had improved.

Leo Laroya, SWS manager for publications, said the term "quality of life" ("*buhay pamumuhay*") was defined by the respondents themselves.

Face-to-face interviews

The pre-election surveys were conducted on March 15-18 and April 14-17, using face-to-face interviews with 1,200 registered voters.

The SWS first quarter survey was conducted on Feb. 26-27, using face-to-face interviews with 1,200 adults.

Samples for the surveys were divided into random samples of 300 each in Metro Manila, the rest of Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao.

The surveys had a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points. Ricle Pedroso, Inquirer Research

Kidnapped priest believed held in Zambo mountains

THE MILITARY HAS PINPOINTED the general location of kidnapped Italian priest Father Giancarlo Bossi, a noted general said yesterday.

Bossi's kidnappers are believed to be hiding in the mountainous Mariangin district in Naga in Zamboanga Sibugay province, said Maj. Gen. Ben Mohammad Dolokiffar.

He said the suspected Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), which is in the last stage of peace negotiations with the government, had relayed the information to the government.

The priest is believed to be held by a 15-man group subject to him soon receiving supplies from local supporters, said Dolokiffar.

"What is important is to be able to contain the kidnappers in one area so we can limit their options. Once we contain them, they will have only two possible options. To escape and probably leave the victim behind or to negotiate," he said.

Bossi, of the Pontifical Institute of Foreign Missions was snatched by armed men believed to be followers members of the MILF some his parish church in the coastal village of Ipilan in Tungawan, Zamboanga Sibugay last Sunday.

Dolokiffar said MILF commander Mohaydin Abdulla, also known as Commander Bidda, has been identified as the likely suspect. He has reportedly denied involvement in the abduction.

Most likely suspect

Dolokiffar, however, said Abdulla was still the most likely suspect, citing his history of kidnapping for ransom for ransom in the south.

Bossi, a tall and powerfully built 57-year-old missionary, has been in the Philippines since 1988 and had worked in the area for the past decade.

Dolokiffar said Abdulla was behind nine kidnap-for-ransom cases since 1998, for which he is believed to have received P8 million.

Three of Abdulla's past kidnap victims were foreigners: two Belgian engineers kidnapped in June 1999 and October 2001 and another Italian priest, Giuseppe Pierantoni, kidnapped in June 2005.

"He is facing many arrest warrants for kidnapping," Dolokiffar said.

The Abdulla group is known to bring their kidnap victims to the Moro area, he said.

He said Bossi's kidnappers have not made any ransom demand because they are on the run.

"They have no chance to communicate since last week," he said.

Dolokiffar said he was optimistic that the Bossi case would be resolved soon because the MILF was helping.

He said the MILF sent its high-ranking member to its armed force, Mohammad Ameen, to help the government.

He did not disclose the possibility of the MILF re-trying to establish contact with the Abdulla group.

Jaro Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, yesterday joined appeals for the speedy release of Bossi, first raised not carrying any ransom.

"I wish those who abducted him have mercy on him and return him to the Church so that his mortified families and relatives may be relieved, that's my prayer for him," Legdameo said in an interview with the Church-owned Radio Veritas.

Veritas also interviewed Fr. Luciano Benedetti, another PIME priest under investigation by the Zamboanga del Norte in 1998 and released after 40 days of captivity.

Strategy

Benedetti, who returned a month ago after his release and is now administering to indigenous communities in the Visayas, said he expected Bossi to be moved from place to place.

"That is their strategy when you're in an open place, I don't know with it's Bossi, maybe he is in a populated area having a room house," he said.

He said it would be hard to rescue the kidnapped Italian priest as he would probably be armed.

Asked the motives behind his own kidnapping in 1998, Benedetti said there were three. Money, strengthen the image of the abductors' organization and secure political concessions from the government.

Benedetti clarified that no ransom was paid for him by his congregation or the Church, but thought "some sector" of the Church or maybe the government may have given money to his captors to pay for his "food and lodging."

He said his studies is so worried about him that she still calls him every Sunday to check on his situation.

Benedetti advised other foreign missionaries to avoid the remote areas of the places where they are being assigned, particularly Mindanao. It would be better for them to stay in their churches and not go to the hinterlands, he said.

"Of course, we are in Muslim and we usually are ready to face any kind of situation, any kind of danger, but sometimes we are also naive and simple people, sometimes we underestimate so much already getting around us," he said.

Legdameo noted the great sacrifices being made by Bossi and other Italian PIME missionaries in the Mindanao.

He said the CBCP holds all missionaries "high in our appreciation and in our gratitude because they are serving another country and are using even Filipinos that we cannot reach." *AFP and Christine Avendaño and Jerome Aning*

Bishops divided on Pope's visit

THAT THE PLANNED visit of Pope Benedict XVI could be politicized, as some anti-administration partisans contend, is not unthinkable because of the Pope's dual role, said Jaro Archbishop Angel Lagdameo.

"You must know that the Holy Father is not only a religious leader but also a temporal leader," said Lagdameo, who chairs the Permanent Committee of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines which oversees the forthcoming papal visit.

The Pope is the leader of the Catholic Church and also a political sovereign as he is the head of the city-state of the Vatican.

Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz has advised the Pope not to visit the Philippines, saying the visit "would dignify a national leadership that is suffering from dire lack of moral authority not to mention its big socio-political problems."

"We don't know if that will happen, but such an interjection is possible," Lagdameo said in an interview with radio station DZRH.

But Jesus Bishop Luis Tagle said the Pope would not be able to go anywhere if officials would think about what his visit would be "manipulated."

Tagle, who is being supported by Manila Archbishop Cardinal Gaudencio Rosales, said a papal visit would inspire the Catholics and remind them to be better Christians as well as of their mission in evangelizing sins.

Rosales said the Herald was certain to receive the Holy Father, but not this month. He said the timing of the papal visit was still being arranged. *Jerome Aning*

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Koko sues 2 execs for poll sabotage

By Norman Bordadora

SENATE MINORITY SENATORIAL candidate Aquilino Pimentel III yesterday filed a complaint of electoral sabotage with the Commission on Elections against vice presidential election supervisors of North Cotabato and South Cotabato for allegedly "padding" the votes of administration senatorial candidates in their areas.

Pimentel, in his complaint, identified the election supervisors as Lilia Badjan of South Cotabato and Rajie Martinez of North Cotabato.

Pimentel filed 12 counts of electoral sabotage against Badjan, who claimed the presidential board of canvassers in South Cotabato—and two counts of the same offense against Matilidan, who chaired the PBC in North Cotabato.

Also named respondents were two other members of the North Cotabato Board, Jose Agoto de Guzman and Gloria Macalintal.

Pimentel accused the election officials of violating Republic Act 9369 which penalizes "the tampering, increasing or decreasing the votes received by a candidate in any election, notwithstanding more than 10,000 votes."

Pimentel claimed that unreliable election documents and testimonies from witnesses revealed that Badjan and John Doe were responsible for allegedly padding the votes of "Team Unity" candidates Edgardo Angara, Juker Aarvoyo, Khalond Debtoson, Pompoyo Pedtoy, Ralph Recto and Jose Miguel Zubiri in General Santos City, Koronadal City and in the municipalities of Banga, Lake Sebu, Norala, Polomolok, Sto. Niño, Surallah, Tampakan, Tantangan, T'Boli and Tupi in South Cotabato.

According to Pimentel, a recount of the certificates of canvass from these cities and municipalities and the statement of votes by municipality showed that Badjan and other correspondents allegedly padded the votes of Angara by 103,000 votes, Aarvoyo by 111,000 votes, Debtoson by 109,000 votes, Pedtoy by 110,000 votes, Recto by 116,000 votes and Zubiri by 77,000 votes in the two cities and 19 municipalities.

Pimentel said Badjan, in conspiracy with persons who were still unknown at this time, "**fraudulently, deliberately and maliciously** tampered and falsified" the statement of votes by municipality, thereby increasing the **number of votes of the TU candidates.**

In another complaint, Pimentel and Matilidan, Dr. Guzman and Macalintal should be held liable for illegally increasing the number of votes garnered by Zubiri in North Cotabato by more or less 170,000 votes while decreasing the votes garnered by Pimentel by more than 40,000 votes.

According to the complaint, the respondent election officials certified to the provincial certificate of canvass that Pimentel got approximately 95,000 votes while Zubiri obtained approximately 260,000 votes.

According to Pimentel, unless the provincial COC for North Cotabato was nullified before the National Board of Canvassers, it was can make because of manifest defects.

As a witness by the special provincial board of canvassers for South Cotabato found that Pimentel actually obtained 130,371 votes while Zubiri obtained only 112,295 votes, he said.

Pimentel and Zubiri are contesting the 12th and last place in the list of winners of the Senate contest. Pimentel is holding on to the 12th slot, built by razor-thin margin.

Pimentel said the respondents themselves "perpetrated and perpetuated the falsification" when they affixed their signatures on the POC and sent the allegedly falsified POC to the Mindanao Board of Canvassers.

PIMENTEL

'07 elections just as dirty as previous ones, says bishop

By Jocelyn Ruiz

AS FAR AS THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED election was concerned, it was as dirty as previous ones, a leading prelate said yesterday.

"What I can say about counting, the buying of votes, is that it was not different from those reported on past elections. We can't say if there was an improvement, but the cynics/critics were still intense because there was still cheating," Catholic Bishop Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) Archbishop Angel Lagdameo said in an interview over Catholic Church-owned Radio Veritas.

Lagdameo also lauded the assessments made by the government and other groups that the elections were "peaceful."

"The point about this [we were talking about] is a qualification," he said. "We can say it was peaceful because the cheating was done quietly, the buying of votes was done quietly, so even the 'peaceful' there were still evidences of human neglect."

The CBCP is expected to come out with its report on the conduct of the elections during its plenary session next month.

The CBCP's National Secretariat for Social Action, Justice and Peace, which served as a watchdog during the elections, will give its members findings on assessment of the democratic exercise.

Lagdameo also asked the Comelec to come up to canvassing of contested votes so that all the sources could be positioned and clear sooner for people by June 30.

"I am surprised that after almost one month, the counting is still not over," the archbishop said.

"[The] Comelec has signed up between the two votations are waiting for the results," he said.

At the same time, Lagdameo congratulated all the election winners, saying he prayed too that all the officials "increase up to the great obligation that they have to the people of God their countrymen."

2 new solons ask GMA to back new Speaker

TWO NEW CONGRESSMEN FROM CEBU—Ivan Lanot and Antonio Tupaz yesterday called on President Macapagal-Arroyo to support a change of leadership in the House of Representatives.

Pampanga Representative-elect Aurelio Gonzales, a previous mate of Ms Arroyo's, said a new Speaker would improve the way voting and credibility of the House.

"If the President wants to endear her voice of the people, voting to free themselves from poverty and fear, then she must support a leadership in Congress that would further wholeheartedly behind her mandate," said Gonzales, a member of NP, Arroyo's party, the Nationalist Multi-ang Pilipino (Kampi).

The no-plume congressman said the President should support a House leadership that would help ensure economic progress under her administration.

Another first-timer, Lapulapu Representative-elect Edgar San Luis, said the last Congress had received the lowest ratings among the senior's primary institutions.

"We must restore the respect of our people in their chosen representatives in Congress," San Luis said.

"We must wipe out the public perception that most members of Congress are corrupt. We must reinstate the dialogue of congressmen as statesmen and sincere leaders who would heal the people and be guilty to national progress and unity."

The two new solons will assume seats in the wake of the speakership contest between Representative Jose de Venecia and Cebu Representative-elect Pablo Garcia.

San Luis said De Venecia should concentrate on solving related economic problems, such as poverty and unemployment, instead of creating old issues that only stirred divisiveness and recrimination among the people.

"Now that the election are over, we should all unite behind the program of the government to eliminate hunger, unemployment and poverty, and to create a stronger sense of national security in the economy," San Luis said. Norman Bordadora

Pinoys more tech-savvy than we think

By Rina T. Chikamatsu

CLARK FREEPORT—THE PHILIPPINE market is more Internet savvy than we think and is ripe for new programs, even those made for students, that can be viewed anytime with a mobile phone or portable device, said MediaQuest president Stephanie Miranda, at his studies.

MediaQuest is a PLDT subsidiary that seeks to offer mobile TV services in the country.

"We are underestimating the Philippine market. The commonly-used indicator of 10-percent PC penetration in Philippine homes is not accurate," Mr. Miranda told reporters during a weekend session organized by the Economic Journalists Association of the Philippines.

"Despite low PCs in non-households, about half or even more than half of Filipinos (26 million) more are based in the Philippines."

"According to a study, the reason for the widespread Friendster use despite the low PC penetration rate is that more and more people are going to Internet cafés to access the Internet if they do not have connection at home. Many people are also using their office Internet and computer for access," Miranda said.

What content makers can do with this information is to create a media platform that the market can buy directly, Mr. Miranda said.

PUMAPAYAG AKO

NA KUMAIN NG BUHOK

** LUMALANGOY SA SARSA ** MENUDO,

HINDI IBAUL ANG MAONG KAHIT
BUTAS PALA SA PUNDILLO.

HIGUPIN ANG INORDER NA KAPE KAHIT MALAMIG,

Iaguhin ang inorder na beer kahit hindi malamig,
sisin ang mukha ng kahera ng nakaumid,
magbayad sa telepono'ng hindi ko ginamit,
tahan ng hilhas sa pagpapakain ng inorder,
tahan ng kalso sa kakanan sa pila,

makong [*sa album ng Air Supply habang nakapikit ako*] *lingo.*

TANGGAPIN ANG

"HINDI KO PO ALAM," "ganun po talaga,"

at "pasensiya na."

Tear up this document.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

The real test

EDITORIAL

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO IS ENOUGH of a political pragmatist to know that, in the aftermath of the opposition's victory in the Senate race, she will have to find her own Donald Rumsfeld, and then fire him. The problem is, she will find more than one deadweight in her administration.

Rumsfeld, of course, was the controversial defense secretary who presided over or, more prodigally, mismanaged the American occupation of Iraq. The clear antiwar message US voters sent the White House in last year's mid-term elections led US President George W. Bush to finally relieve Rumsfeld; not a few Republicans thought the decision came too late, since Rumsfeld's continuing presence at the Pentagon was a constant reminder during the campaign of the deterioration of the situation in Iraq.

Politically, Bush had no choice but to let go of his cantankerous defense secretary. Same thing with President Arroyo: Whether she admits it or not, the results of the Senate elections, the only nationwide contest and therefore the only referendum of national scope in the May 14 elections, force her to respond to the debacle. She has no choice.

The lessons of our own short history are clear: If an incumbent cares about the results of the next election, she has to respond to the results of the present one.

It does not come as a surprise, therefore, that the President has asked for the resignation of all Cabinet members and the heads of all government-owned and -controlled corporations. These are courtesy resignations: that is, the officials concerned pay the President the courtesy of tendering their resignation immediately, instead of indistinctly making their case before her.

But Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, perhaps to emphasize the point that the President actually means business, decided not to use the term. "It's not courtesy resignation. The President asked them to submit their resignation so that she will have a free hand ... to reorganize." But of course. That is what courtesy resignations are for. Besides, the President has to provide for loyal allies who are now out of a job, like resigning Manila Mayor Lito Atienza.

Already, two Palace insiders have leaked their own version of the President's short list.

In both their lists—self-serving as these leaks sometimes are—the names of the heads of the government's top revenue-generating agencies appear: Jose Isidro Camacho, commissioner of the Bureau of Internal Revenue, and Napoleon Morales, commissioner of the Bureau of Customs.

It is no surprise to find that the positions of BIR chief and Customs commissioner figure in the rumors; in major revamps, they almost always do, precisely because the posts are among the most coveted in the entire bureaucracy. But it is unusual to find the name of Ermita, the second most powerful man in Malacañang, included—even as a trial balloon.

But finding out blunders have nothing to do with the outcome of the elections. The same cannot be said about Ermita. While he himself did not run, his son did, as the running mate of Batangas governor-elect Vilma Santos. Today, Ermita's son is embroiled in a bitter electoral dispute; whatever the outcome of that contest, it is already clear that Ermita came out of the elections diminished.

Ephraim Genuino, the influential chair of the cash-rich Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., is another high official laid low by the elections. Both his sons lost, and Genuino himself figured in wire reports as an arrogant official entering voting centers in Makati City with armed bodyguards.

If the President accepts the resignation of close allies Ermita and Genuino, then it seems she is really serious about her vow to consider, forthwith, all her political debts paid.

Her real test, however, involves controversial or unpopular officials who did relatively well in the elections, such as the irascible Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez. In the last two years, Gonzalez has served a special function, acting as the President's lightning rod. In doing so, however, Gonzalez debased the administration of justice and deepened the divisiveness that marks Philippine politics. It is time for him and others like him to exit the stage.

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RP-Korea air talks were disgusting

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

INDEPENDENT PHILIPPINES! AS I SAID IN the previous column, we are not supposed to be the puppet states of our ally. We are to be guided by our characteristics of companies, foreign oil companies, foreign car companies, foreign arms companies. Even in the field of civilian aviation, we are not independent. Foreign governments and foreign airlines dictate our aviation policies. Therefore, it is no use our officials who make it easy for foreign airlines to come to us. One of them is Undersecretary Edward O. Paguinto of the Department of Transportation and Communications.

Paguinto's actions at the recently concluded Philippine-South Korea air talks in Davao were highly irregular. Although he was the chair of the Philippine panel, he behaved as if he was a member of the South Korean panel. He argued for the Koreans and turned the members of the Philippine panel against the arguments of their own. Now, perhaps, planning is by a Korean consul?

Members of the RP panel (composed of representatives of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Civil Aeronautics Board, Department of Tourism, Department of Trade and Industry, Philippine airline companies, Clark Development Corp.) were disgusted with Paguinto for caving in, without even trying to put up a fight, to give in to all the demands of the Koreans. According to those who were there, this is what happened:

The air talks were conducted with an almost total lack of transparency. Most sessions were private meetings between Paguinto and the Korean chair and their aides, leaving the other RP panel members in the dark. They had to rely entirely on one-sided reports from Paguinto on how the discussions were progressing.

Despite these constraints imposed by Paguinto, the RP panel members adopted a unanimous position, expressed in a joint MOU signed by all the members, which their chair asked the chair in reply to South Korea as RP's final proposal.

The Korean chair, in a brief plenary session on May 11:

• Castigated the Philippines for its proposal, which he declared was "very different" from the position taken by Paguinto in the April 16 meeting in Seoul and in his previous meetings with his Korean counterparts.

• Bolstered a take-it-or-leave-it demand that included giving South Korea 35,000 seats per week on the Philippine-Korea routes (as against the current 6,300 seats a week, a whopping 17 percent increase).

• Warned that if RP did not capitulate, South Korea would gradually disappear and phase out all existing routes between Manila and disappear all new applications by any RP carrier.

• Warned that Korea would not meet with RP in the next few years unless there is a "dramatic change" in RP policy and the panel's position.

• Said that these actions would create a shortage of seats forcing Korean tourist traffic to drop from 600,000 to just 200,000 annually.

In one point, the Korean chair even blackmailed the Filipinos by warning that he would take the case please out of Davao if the RP panel did not accept his demands.

And when did Paguinto do? He did not give a firm response to these demands on the contrary, he pressured his panel members to accede to the Korean demands, enumerating the dire effects of flight cancellations, repeatedly stressing the importance of the Philippine tourism and that of our airline industry compared to the might of the South Koreans. Paguinto kept saying we have to bow to the state's economically and technologically advanced Koreans. He should have been in the Korean panel.

At one point, some members of the Korean panel were present to G. Ordoc of the BPA, vice chair of the RP panel, that Korea would accept a compromise that would limit capacity to 14,000 seats, but Paguinto dismissed these backchannel signals and said he would listen only to the hard-line demands of the Korean chair.

The RP panel members were appointed to Paguinto to conduct the next air traffic discussions in plenary session so that there would be full transparency and to counter that RP assumptions, strategies, properties and bottom line with the fallback position if Korea insists. Paguinto agreed.

Then, without telling the panel members, he slipped off to meet privately with the Korean chair instead of holding a plenary session. At least half the panel felt that the other side would not budge and that he decided to accept their demands, thus presenting the panel with a fait accompli.

When half of the panel members woke a morning-after session (after registration, typically, if those members include the aviation regulators (CAB), the chief diplomatic agency (DFA), and the BPA) they agreed with the biggest stake in the RP-Korea market (PAL), the chair is disheartened to find a way to address their numerous material, their concerns were ignored in a supposed no-holding maneuver that he conducted behind closed doors. At last, he applied pressure on the CAB representative, executive director C. Avelin, to change his vote by warning him that a board displeases President Macapagal-Arroyo. To his credit, Avelin did not back down.

Why did Paguinto behave that way? I don't know. But maybe we should go back to what happened before the talks. There are reports that Paguinto slipped out of Manila last April 19. Only then is minister/alter ego formal talks, to meet with his counterpart in Seoul and know the knowledge of the RP panel.

What were the terms of the Davao talks? In one word, disgusting.

Abbas' bad neighborhood

WORLD VIEW

Dawood Kuttab

WITH GAZA FORCES ON TO THE BRINK OF CIVIL war, any poor Mahmoud Abbas, who took over as president of the Palestinian Authority two and a half years ago after the death of Yasser Arafat. An academic by profession, Abbas has used stability to lead the Palestinian people with civility, adherence to democratic principles and public dialogue for violence.

He never had a chance. Palestinian rivals, both from his own Fatah party and from the Islamic Hamas, as well as the Israelis, perceived Abbas' civility as weakness.

Abbas interpreted a vastly different state of management from that of Arafat. Obsessed in his confrontation with Israel, Arafat delegated authority over municipal matters to Fatah's revolutionary wing (Arafat's revolutionary name de guerre) did not believe that it was time to become a civilian president while the Israeli occupation continued. Steward in a vain and vie, Abbas assumed responsibility for municipal affairs, appointing governors and mayors, while maintaining in the presidency, but had no idea what to do with giant cross infinities.

One of the first controversies I heard from journalists was that Abbas, evidently may, were home to lunchtime and weekend regular business hours, while other nations, Abbas, is not a workaholic, any name but reflects the practice of naming a person as the father of his eldest son. Abbas' son, Mazen, runs a local advertising agency.

In his attempt to counter Arafat's political corruption and mismanagement, Abbas had an unfortunate chance he had to nominate the loyalty of the Fatah leadership, newly-appointed PA officials, security personnel, and, most importantly, local militants. Calling for national elections, while politically astute, was political suicide, for he lacked any idea of the possible outcome and did very little to ensure the discipline of Fatah. An attempt at a primary to choose Fatah candidates backfired, owing to fraud and the losers' refusal to honor the results. Hard feelings and bitterness split the party's ranks, allowing Hamas an easy victory.

Negotiations with the Israelis was one area

Dawood Kuttab is a Palestinian director of the Institute of Modern Media at Al Quds University in Jerusalem.

Perfect timing

ANALYSIS

Antonody Buensuceso

The total revamp signals a new dawning of humility, of bowing to the sovereign will by an administration whose result in trials during the past two years has been outrageous and unwilling to the slightest arbitrary use of power. It also vainly recognized that the mid-term election sent a referendum of the corrupt administration.

Such a vulnerability to public opinion and electoral mandate is rarely found to be appreciated by the public; it can be interpreted as the honest effort at political reconciliation and opens the door to the elusive think blame of the weeds of politics to subside.

The revamp is a political maneuverable in timing, it didn't wait for the proclamation by the Commission on Elections on the final election results. It therefore shuts the lander from the proclamation. It handed the President the opportunity to regain the lost momentum and the key personalities of executive disaster into an advantage. It came at a time when the economy acting independently of political uncertainty and unrest, was showing signs of an economic turnaround.

The revamp comes at the triumphant opportune in the former hopeless to crack its disarray ever how to devise its spoils. Already opposition leaders are squabbling over the Senate presidency and the chairmanships of key committees, and several blocs and factions have emerged among the 13 opposition winners in the Senate and the first opposition members in the Senate.

Together, the opposition winners can form a new majority to take control of the Senate, but their disunity offers the President an opportunity to exploit. The election has left the administration with a bloc of eight, including the two Team Unity candidates who survived the Genuine Opposition (GO) bloc, Senators Edgardo Angara and Juan Ponce Enrile. Either the members of the enlarged opposition in the Senate pull themselves together in a unified way over the former presidency and forge policy issues, they cannot quickly squander their newfound gains and allow the President to thwart their objective of taking control of the Senate and relaying the initiative for setting the national agenda for the next three years.

The reluctance of the heads of government agencies and financial institutions in the announced revamp includes the three members head chopping in the public mind even to be underscored by the worst year Arroyo administration. The announcement that the Executive report of the latest blunder that the Philippines does not need to impose new taxes for needed to plug leaks in the collection of existing taxes is seen in fiscal targets. Another one finishing World Bank director for the Philippines, said no findings since the critical element that could contribute to the fiscal gap is the 70% shortfall in collection by the Bureau of Internal Revenue. "We hope that this would be to focus all its energies on raising and improving tax administration," he said. New taxes are not necessary "in the short term," he added.

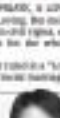
In the first quarter, the Bureau of Internal Revenue collected P140 billion, P12 billion less than the P153 billion collection target set by the government for the period. The shortfall in revenue collection is blamed for the current budget deficit of P32 billion, exceeding the targeted ceiling of P60.8 billion.

Revenue last year was boosted by the increase in the value-added tax rate from 10 percent to 12 percent in February 2006. The value-added tax was one of the key fiscal measures pushed by the administration to reach the deficit. There are concerns that the fiscal gains may not be sustained in view of the revenue shortfall during the first quarter.

Loving story

IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN MORE APPROPRIATE. A LOVE story involving a couple with the surname Loving. But there was a lover story the case was a landmark civil right, offering lessons not just for Americans but for the whole world.

On June 12, 1967, the US Supreme Court ruled in a "Loving vs Virginia" case that laws banning interracial marriages were unconstitutional.



PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

At that time, there were still 17 American states that had such "anti-miscegenation laws" all of which were rendered null and void by the ruling.

I will explain, shortly, how Filipinos in the States were also affected by these laws, but let me get back to the Lovings' story.

Lovings in Virginia

The 1967 Supreme Court decision came in response to a case filed by Richard and Mildred Loving against the state of Virginia. Richard was white and Mildred black. Of course, to be "black" here instead of the archaic politically correct term is "African-American." Both were from the state of Virginia, but had to travel to get married because they couldn't because Virginia had a Racial Integrity Act which prohibited interracial marriages.

In the American system, each state can formulate its own laws as long as these do not violate provisions of the Constitution. It was in 1958 when the Lovings went to the state to get married. Since the couples would be going back to the states law, they went to Washington, D.C., which was right at the doorstep of Virginia. So the Lovings crossed the border and got married.

They would have thought they would then live happily ever after, but when they returned to Virginia to live, their home was raided one night and they were arrested. Virginia's Racial Integrity Act didn't just forbid interracial marriages within Virginia, but also didn't recognize marriages outside of the state.

The Loving case were sentenced to a year's large imprisonment, but later given a choice: their sentence would be suspended if they agreed to live outside of Virginia for 25 years. The Lovings did leave, settling down in Washington where Richard took up a job as a bricklayer. But the Lovings' still rude was not easy since they were away from family and friends. They wanted to return home.

Eventually they wrote to Robert Kennedy who at that time was the US attorney general, asking for legal assistance. Kennedy referred the case to the American Civil Liberties Union, where two lawyers offered to take up the case. Virginia's Supreme Court however ruled Act, with clear bridge, Leon Bazile, writing: "Almighty God created the races white, black, yellow, Malay and red, and he placed them on separate continents. ... The fact that he separated the races shows that he did not intend for the races to mix."

The case then moved up to the US Supreme Court, which ruled on June 12, 1967 that the anti-miscegenation laws were unconstitutional.

Mongolian or Malay?

Looking back now, I'm amazed to how such laws could have existed in the United States so late into the 20th century.

Apparently, the Nazis in Germany had similar anti-Jewish laws, but then it wasn't anything quite how racists way as to much part of state and religious ideology (the South African apartheid regime would cite the Bible as the basis for their racist policies). But coat to think of the United States as a bastion of freedom and human rights for forget racists laws existed until as late as 1967.

The term "miscegenation" ("mixing of genes") dates back only to the 19th century, but anti-miscegenation laws go back to the 17th century during the British colonial period. Virginia had one of those early interracial bans on marriage, which was followed by other states. Some states banned only whites and black slaves in mind. The ban on interracial sex was, of course, commonly violated but interracial marriages were effectively suppressed.

Even after slavery was abolished after the Civil War, anti-miscegenation laws continued and were even expanded in the 20th century, with new states adopting them as the practice of racial segregation. During the first part of the 20th century, many US states (not, mainly Indiana, migrated to the United States as workers. Many of the marriage who ended up in California remained but before because that state did not allow them to marry (Asian Americans).

Who knows what new names emerged in those years. Some home couples were off to other states where they could marry (where, mainly Filipinos who went to work in the states of Washington and Alaska, defined by Native Americans as "Indians"). Others were not so lucky and remained barbarians. In the 1970s and 1980s, many of the retired oldtimers returned to the Philippines where they were able to find young Filipina brides.

Scientists generally recognize that race is an artificial category—all humans have the same genes, with genetic variation within "races" greater than between "races." Race is based on our perceptions of physical appearance, which can be arbitrary as was shown in California's anti-miscegenation laws. Originally, California banned marriage between "Mulatto" and "Mongolian," the latter category defined to include Filipinos. In 1933, the California Supreme Court ruled that a Malay is white women and challenged California's anti-miscegenation law, arguing that Filipinos were "Malay" and not "Mongolian." The California judge handling his case agreed with him, but two months after that court decision, California's lawyers introduced their own interpretation similar to its whole idea of race. Based on "scientific" information of white fixation and his published did, California kept its anti-miscegenation law until 1948.

Even today, Americans grapple constantly with race. Their universal measures still insist on asking for racial classifications, with all schools requiring students to choose from White, Native American, Asian, Pacific Islander and Other Pacific Islander. There is a "Some Other Race" category for "mulatto," "metiso," "mestizo."

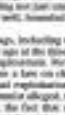
The reality is that beyond skin color, we all look pretty much alike. Armed with a few breakthroughs, I have passed as Japanese, Indonesian, Thai, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Brazilian, Arab, Japanese-Brazilian), even Indian (where they thought I was from one of the northern states).

Back to our love story. The Lovings did go to live in Virginia, live life for interracial couples, and their children, remains difficult in many parts of the United States. The people from Loving County, Texas, for example, have refused to subscribe as children of interracial marriages or not. What's so sad is that I've met so many Filipinos in the States who are themselves quite racist, with very condescending views of blacks and Hispanics, and also intolerant of other forms of diversity. For example, several acquaintances in the Philippines have expressed concern at my marriage to a Muslim. I've met many Filipinos married to Caucasians who have children of mixed race who are quite racist against blacks.

I'd like to see our schools dealing with the fallacy of race and the dangers of racism. A good place to start might be this Loving story.

One lucky man

AT LARGE



Rissa Nemenzo-Bartolome

FROM THE BEGINNING, THE CHILD VICTIMS' search for justice seemed charmed. While her pro guardian was under trial for trafficking, having pimped the girl to various clients, her case remained listed inside detention because it was alleged that the out of her district had been apprehended.

The recent double-time promotion of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the girl told her story on a team of three women lawyers appointed by the DSWD. But when the lawyers entered the prosecutor-chiefs initiated in the charge sheet, the girl's lawyers were told that they were acknowledging their not acting the same clear. Then, unable public official" into the trial.

Only when the girl gave an interview to the newspapers (with the consent of the DSWD and the lawyers) that the case of the girl's lawyers, with rather graphic account of her encounters with that "honorable" official was public opinion moved enough to demand that her prosecution claims be acted on with far vigor.

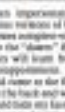
The recent double-time case still had a rough road to travel on the way to the courtroom. There were those who charged the lawyers, the girl's lawyers and the DSWD for allowing the interview to take place and be published, as if reading or denial of the public's right to know could undo the deed of the public official. There were statements to the effect the politician was being subjected to "trial by publicity," and that feminists were using the case as a vehicle against male privilege. This columnist, who is now a lawyer and a feminist, can only say that there was no rape as all client (a girl was a "child prostitute" and that the fact mentioned any with his politician, bargaining, of course, that the girl was 12 years old at the time of the assault.

WELL, the case prosecutors count. But even after the accused rapist was identified as Rep. Romeo Jalosjos, the media seemed more interested in "saving" the girl, humanizing her and her family, than in the case itself and the prosecution.

I remember the news footage and photos of three newscasters, the girl's head switched between a jacket while her trusted lawyers hid her among the newsmen and one was making sure

Cutting through complexity

LOOKING BACK



Jacobeth R. Gerampio

CLASSES HAVE FINALLY ENDED AND I WILL have a few hours of over 100 students this semester. The challenge is to live up to my expectations of a book as a learned teacher. Coping with the curriculum is easy, but living up to the students' ideals is another matter because many of the legends that surround me are simply untrue, or at least half true.

In the days when I grew enough gray hair to be considered an old member of classrooms, students assumed that I perpetual a lie (from the exercise of teaching) and used hefty dispute, instead of a handkerchief, to dry myself. I thought that a merit way to deal with the lies. For how can you have an argument with a liar? Besides, I knew that lying would be one of those course "Good Morning" last months you are like pokes on the barn needs of jargon debate. Unfortunately students misread the added who used dispute as a face towel and handkerchief to wipe their sweat.

With the reputation for necessary dirty conclusion, the urban legends followed. One student asked, "Is it true that you came to class once dressed as a priest? Is it true that you came with a camera or complete with sword, six pack and spatter?"

"I didn't know what that color looks, so I replied, "No, I didn't come to class as a priest, I came as the priest!" And because teachers do not lie, that remark was taken literally and I now have a reputation of coming to class as a bird comb.

Another legend is that I have a short temper by my old mom's habit. The truth certainly my was at new to the 21st century students that they were terrified. But that was the exception that I found myself and told them how happy I was that they had an interest in learning Ethical Issues. Eventually, when the year was over, I found that they treasured when I told them they were in a class on Philippine history.

Every semester my students cross their fingers, hoping that I will be inspired enough to do my assessment high, rewarding the highest with not many very much, but if your grades are low, then attending the highest not really matters.

Among questions that appear in the highest or pre-selected Philippine script. Item questions are designed to make students read and analyze a given document. In one case, my students were asked to read Antonio Pigafetta's account of the Battle of Mactan in 1521. Students are to point to just one problem. Of the three questions that I have made the student assess over one or false. But that is not as challenging as asking the students to use the primary source document and answer the review and comment of the battle, not from the viewpoint of the historian of the time, but from the viewpoint of the chief of Cebu. What will a full-blooded Filipino's species we now known as Lapu-Lapu) are but kept in mind, as we? One student fixed a page with "pink, pink, pink..." and ended with, "Sorry, I cannot understand this language." I was flattered to think of me as a native language. Another student described my comments as "Ang Ganda" (Beautiful) and "Ang Pangit" (Ugly).

Another common question was, "What is the significance of the dog in the connection scene of the Motion Picture about this or, Brad?" Students given very elaborate answers like: "Before Jesus was born, the dog was on a leash, but when he left, the dog was untied to escape. This symbolizes that we were once enslaved but Christ's death freed us all." To everyone's surprise the question was not answered by our simply word "Jesus or Wala."

History is not just about dates, names, places and events. It is supposed to teach the student to be critical in dealing with texts and more critical in dealing with questions that require commentaries, issues explained in school and beyond class. Dealing through complexity is a skill every one has to learn.

Comments are welcome at jacobeth@hotmail.com

Can errors denied be corrected?

LETTERS

SOMETHING IN THE ARTICLE "Flying education fiasco," written by Bernadeth del Mundo, loudly made my blood boil. Excuses, 6/1/07)

The Department of Education said that the percentage of "convictions" of the public school-issue book "Pag-Unlad ng Pilipino" is exaggerated. It said the incredible because a panel of DepEd staff and academicians themselves confirmed the presence in the book of 9 contraceptives, 20 bad and 47 low passage errors. That's a lot! Doesn't the DepEd realize the meaning of that?

It's like saying that an electric bar that blows but six is still a good buy? I can see why Asesino Calipio Go is not keen on working with the DepEd, and I believe him when he says that the book in question has more than 146 errors. I find little comfort when I hear the DepEd officials say that "further examining corrections have been published." What errors were corrected when their very existence had been denied in the first place?

We, the people, know the real score and the DepEd both endlessly too much. There's only I'm doing everything possible to see to I could keep my four children from attending public schools. I know there will not learn anything from

—ROBERT ALLEN CONCEPCION, M.D., rj_concepcion@hotmail.com

Unfounded accusations against Garcia

I WAS DUMBFOUNDED BY THE ridiculous of Belinda Olivares-Cuenco's column titled "Governdolyn as Cebu's Dragon Lady" which was actually a wicked assault on the Governor of Cebu, Dragon, 6/12/07)

The piece was a scramble character assassination of Rep. Pablo Garcia and his children, especially GOP president Wilfredo Garcia and Cebu Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia, based on a web of unfounded rumors and baseless accusations.

I wonder why the business of Governor Garcia as senior always parcels allegedly made by the Governor in conglomerates, when she would only be concerned on matters of her wife and obvious allegations.

In my opinion, Governor moved the buy-outs with local Governor Garcia. It was clear that she was just emphasizing the fact that, as governor of the province, she is entitled to be treated with local courtesies as would be befitting her rank as well the prime minister's post during Chavez change.

What made Governor's column more deplorable is the fact Governor Garcia is a radiant girl of Cebu de Arnaiz, the wife of Speaker De Venecia, a fact that Governor herself had admitted in her past columns. Governor is obviously beholden to the De Venecias.

What's new in Governor's objectivity and impartiality? How could

Clarifications about Easco

THE REFERS TO THE NEWS ITEM titled "11 insurance firms up for suspension" (Business, 5/28/07) which stated that the Insurance Commission has ordered them "unable to meet the capital retention requirement."

On behalf of the Eastern Insurance and Surety Corp. (Easco), let me make the following clarifications:

1. The new name of Easco is Milestone Guaranty Insurance Corp., a company registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Its Authorized Capital Stock was increased from P50 million to P100 million since 2003's approval on April 16, 2007.

2. The stockholders' parts from capital infusion of P25 million to meet the P100 million minimum capital requirement under IRC Under his 27 (b).

3. However, the corporation's

Nothing wrong with PMA hloc

THAT IS A REACTION TO THE editorial titled "Sir, no, sir!" (Opinion, 6/12/07)

From its opening salvo..."They made it sound like it was a good thing"—the editorialist has revealed how the business perceived the impending "union" of PMA graduates to the Senate. It registered concern about such a group exercising its power as legislators and set to acting only in the Senate. What should be of greater concern to have the influence and swing vote would be wielded.

I would take my chances with those individuals rather than with the politicians who exercise to protect our nation with their disparity apparent lack of principles and interests of the nation. In fact, those men spoke what others merely keep silent and saved others others simply willed under the pressure of unjust and selfish governance.

The editorial said that the formation of any group within the halls of Congress would be obnoxious, and would be an insult to the common Filipino. This view has its basis, I agree that we should always look to our peers in order to learn how to handle the future, but we should never live in it. I firmly believe that military values are ugly loud when the actions and selfishness of men become an impediment to the advancement of military Filipinos

If you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Ilaya and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send it fax to 896-6214, 897-4794, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and tele-phone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Good luck to 'Cars'

ON THE DAY THE first game of the 2007 NBA finals was scheduled, I read the news about the "Cavaliers" that LeBron James elevated fans. Timelike Lamont said was a performing. Anyone, 6/9/07) What a coincidence. I couldn't help but smile, thinking as there that LeBron and Lamont et al. were just huge fans of Cleveland Cavaliers' LeBron James—that's why the name.

Seriously speaking, I admire the class of Senator Lacson and the three other gentlemen who would compose the blue [Crispin Beltran, Rodolfo Biazon and Rodolfo Noriel IV]. Each one of them has shown himself man enough to fight for what he believes is right. He is not afraid to face the consequences of his actions.

If the Governor Cavaliers have James at their supreme, the "Senate Cavaliers" have Williams. Both of them are young, have proven charismatic to be competent in their respective fields. Actors, by bringing the Cleveland Cavaliers to the NBA finals, and Williams for winning in the 2007 senatorial race despite his being in prison.

This blue will provide the four former military men a great opportunity to fight for their advocacies in a truth. It should be easy for them to pull with each other. And I think it will be nice to see this down-

Good luck to the Senate Cavaliers. I hope you continue doing what you think is the best for the whole country. Don't let anyone ruin your

—MELANIE P. AGADON, 99 Labo-Sto. Tomas St., Bagong Ilog, Pasig City

Clarifications about Easco

[same name was not publicly announced relative to the strong and persistent rumor of our sales people to create fear of our clients. Other than that, we have been in business, according to them, but, since 1966, built goodwill and a respectable reputation in the industry.

4. Subsequently, recognizing the merit of their recommendation, the company is about to file a Certificate of Amended Articles of Incorporation with the SEC.

—ALBERTO V. LAUDE, executive vice president, Eastern Insurance and Surety Corp., 2634 Jacinto St., Makati, Manila

The business simply wants the story based on what the Insurance Commission reported in a press conference held last week.

—MICHELLE U. REMO, Inquirer reporter

Unfounded accusations against Garcia

when the people elected to lead and govern to fail to deliver on their promises, whether collectively or individually, due to use is relief.

Politicians may form all the blues they want, and I wouldn't care. If the grouping is based on school, region, faith or economic status. They can use the influence of their members and collaborators to campaign, promote, protect, politicize or protect whatever is a true advance or direct shows, and for as long as that favors the common good, I would never see a problem.

The editorial also reflects narrow-mindedness, as well as shallow and short-sighted thinking. Maybe, because of this, we as a nation should would be afraid. I shudder at the thought of how some people with the power of the pen can think so superficially.

Maybe, we should reflect why Rodolfo Biazon, Gregorio Honasan, Panfilo Lacson and Antonio Trillanes IV are now in the hallowed hallsof the Senate. Maybe, they speak the words ordinary Filipinos can relate to. Maybe, they are more in touch with what they say. Or we would tolerate when. Maybe, their actions embody what many Filipinos crave to find in our leaders. Maybe, they are the missing link we have against a truly selfish regime.

—ROMEO M. ACOB, police director (Ret.)

A new political environment

AT THIS POINT, WE CAN JUST with certainty that the next Senate will be unlike under the control of the opposition.

Tobin Ibro, Manny Villar on Jinggoy Estrada, Sen. Loren Legarda as majority floor leader and Sen. Irene Honrtveld as chair of the blue ribbon committee, our people can feel more confident and calm.

With key roles in these blocks now in the hands of opposition mayors like Noel Lim Ejercito, Ado Inoky (Batan) and Jejomar Binay (Pasay), there is no question that the political leaders in Southern Tagalog and Metro Manila can enable many shift political preferences in the coming 2010 elections.

Eventually, even if President

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Lawyer revives call for PCGG abolition

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE CALL FOR THE ABOLITION of the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) was revived yesterday by a Makati lawyer who said the agency has nothing officially after a Quezon City court acquitted former First Lady Imelda Marcos of tax charges.

"It has outlived its purpose," presidential legal adviser Sergio Apostol said in a phone interview.

He said he should also fall on the Philippine National Oil Corp. (PNOC), National Power Corp. (Napocor) and other nonperforming government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs), Apostol said.

"They should be abolished ... because they are not making money anymore," he said.

Apostol recalled several past studies on the abolition of the PCGG, the agency created during the Aquino administration to go after the ill-gotten assets of the Marcoses, their relatives and cronies.

"All these studies fizzled out," he said.

Apostol belied allegations Malacañang had underwriting to do with the acquittal of Imelda Marcos on Wednesday by the Quezon City Regional Trial Court on five counts of Tax Code violations due to the prosecution's failure to establish criminal intent.

"There was no deal," he said in Filipino and English. "If there was a negotiation, the trial should have proceeded. But the trial was finished and a decision was issued."

Apostol pointed out it was the Bureau of Internal Revenue that "decided to pursue this [case] as there's no reason to think this was part of any deal."

Apostol admitted, however, that President Macapagal-Arroyo had been tweaking out in her tirades, including the Marcoses, as part of her overarching goal of national reconciliation in the post-election period.

"But if a case has been, it should not be negotiated," he said.

Asked if the President would order the Office of the Solicitor General to appeal the decision, Apostol said: "Normally, yes."

"We still owe a lot. Yet, the government should fight it out through the SOL," he said.

He said corporations that were acquitted for being part of the ill-gotten wealth of the Marcoses and which had been cleared of encumbrances by the courts should be sold.

"Nobody is claiming them, as they should be disposed of. That's the PCGG mandate," he said.

As for GOCCs, "like the PNOC—three of [six] subsidiaries are not making them cry—they should be dissolved instead. Or the appropriate department should [do it]," Apostol, invited by a former PNOC president, said.

"There's a law I heard that is proposing the abolition of Napocor. It should be abolished or privatized," he said.

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Akbayan solons take up cudgels for breastfeeding

By Leila B. Salaverria

TAKING THE CUDGELS FOR breastfeeding advocates, Akbayan Representatives Risa Hontiveros and Etta Rosales yesterday asked the Supreme Court to dismiss the suit seeking a halt in the implementation of the milk code, which among others prohibits the advertisement of infant formulas.

Raising a possible conflict of interest issue, Rosales and Hontiveros expressed concern about Solicitor General Agnes Devanadera's impending defense of the Department of Health's milk code.

They pointed out that the Department of Trade and Industry had written Devanadera to consider the suit's impact on trade, investment, employment and other commercial activities of the milk companies in the country. They also said that the United States Chamber of Commerce had asked the OSG to recognize the several implementing rules of the milk code, including the advertising ban.

"[We] have every reason to believe that the Solicitor General's representation of DOH in this case will be affected by other competing or compromised interests of a clear conflict of interest" because DOH and DTI, Rosales and Hontiveros said in their comment filed yesterday.

Rosales and Hontiveros was suffering from a "schizophrenic condition" because of the opposing positions of the DOH and the DTI, but the advice that if Devanadera had been a lawmaker, "many in the world have known which side to pick.

The DOH, represented by the solicitor general, and the Philippine Food and Health Care Association of the Philippines (PFAP) are scheduled to hold oral arguments on the milk code case on June 19.

The Supreme Court, upon the PFAP's petition, earlier ordered a temporary halt to the implementation of the milk code's rules, which include the ban on the advertising, promotion or marketing of materials and activities for infant milk substitutes intended for infants and children up to two years old.

The PFAP had opposed the rules, saying they would stop the free flow of information about the nutritional content of infant formula and would hinder mothers from learning about proper infant feeding, thus putting babies' lives at risk.

But the DOH said the milk code was important because its implementing rules were intended to prevent infants' deaths. It said the rules were intended to regulate the manufacturers and distributors of infant formula and breast milk substitutes that make claims that their products could make children more intelligent, thus undermining the breastfeeding culture.

In supporting the DOH stand, Rosales and Intiveros said advertising was the means by which the milk companies propagated their claims, and this should be stopped. They said mothers were persuaded by statements from companies that their infant milk could give babies better vision, higher IQs and stronger immune systems.

Although these claims have only been observed to hold in some instances, infant formula manufacturers are nevertheless more persuasive simply because the claims are warranted with absolute persistence," they said.

The lawmakers also said medical and scientific research had shown that children who were not breast-fed were more likely to be malnourished and thus more prone to illness or death. They said the dire effects of non-breastfeeding would have been avoided if the advertisements of breast-milk substitutes were controlled or the milk code's rules intended.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, June 15, 2007
Second Week of Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Exb 34:1-14
2nd Reading: Rom 5:8-11
Gospel: Luke 15:1-7

Jesus told them this parable: "Who among you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, will not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and seek out the lost one till he finds it? And finding it, will he not joyfully carry it home on his shoulders? Then he will call his friends and neighbors together and say: 'Rejoice with me for I have found my lost sheep.' I tell you, just so, there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one repentant sinner than over ninety-nine upright who do not need to repent."

Reflection

Jesus is the Shepherd who leads the sheep, rescuing sheep, gathering sheep together, leading sheep home, protecting them, and getting them every peace. He seeks out the lost, forgiving, bringing back the sheep, binding the injured, but destroying the sleek, unable sheep, slaughtering all with justice. This is the face of the heart of God in Jesus.

His face has been shared with us in the life/death/resurrection of Jesus. And so we, but we ever have we failed, even when we have been infamous, all we have known is God's reconciliation and mercy in Jesus the Lord. We have well learn the one lost and straying that has been brought back to the other sheep—so that we could all be one again in God. The Shepherd wants to keep us all together. The heart of Jesus seeks to bring us all into the fullness of God, the Trinity, so that we might dwell as one.

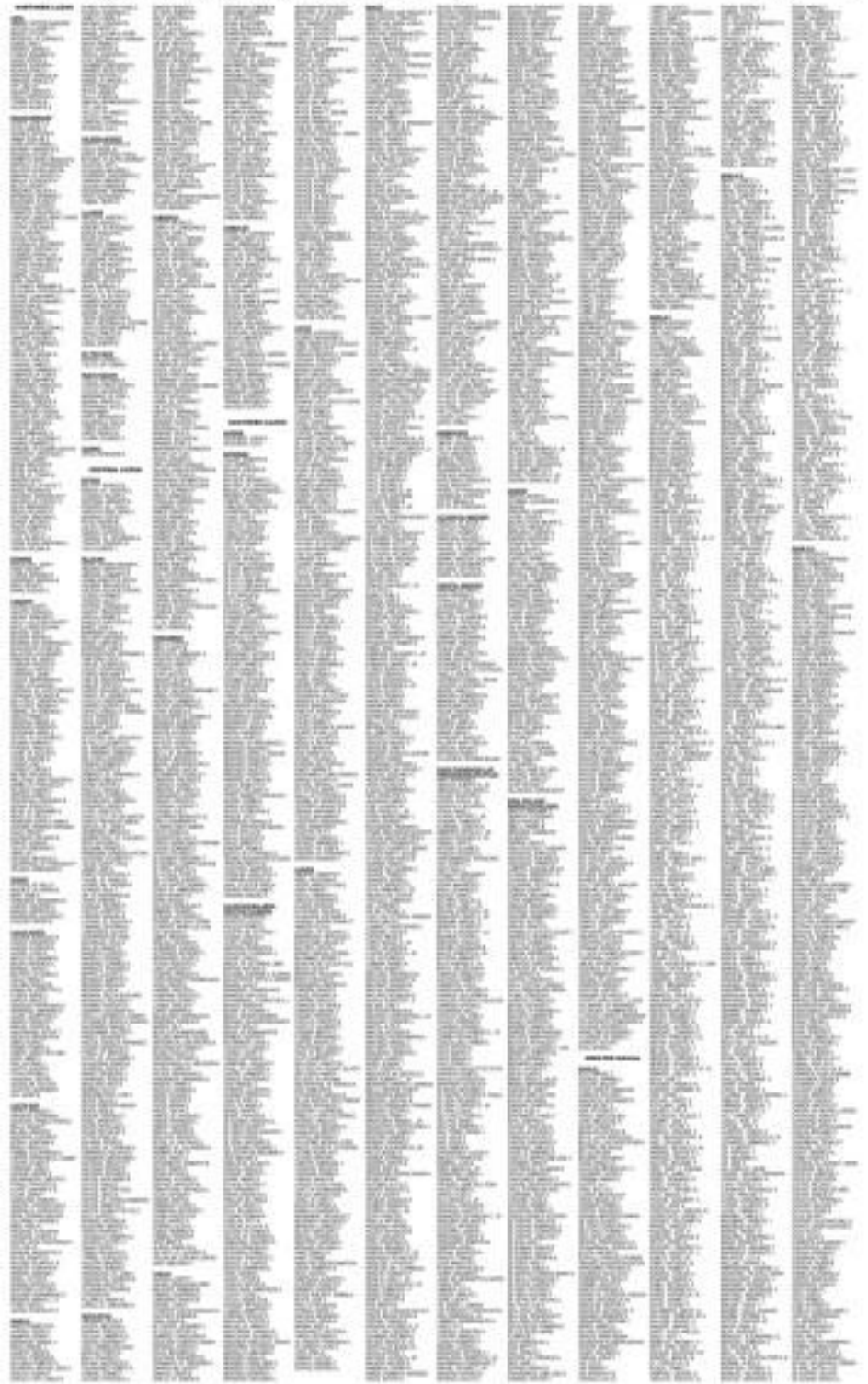
Quotations/Reflections are © Bro. Clifford Sorita, SJ, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City, Philippines. Used with permission. All rights reserved worldwide. http://www.ateneo.edu/index.php/Christian-Reflections-Homilies

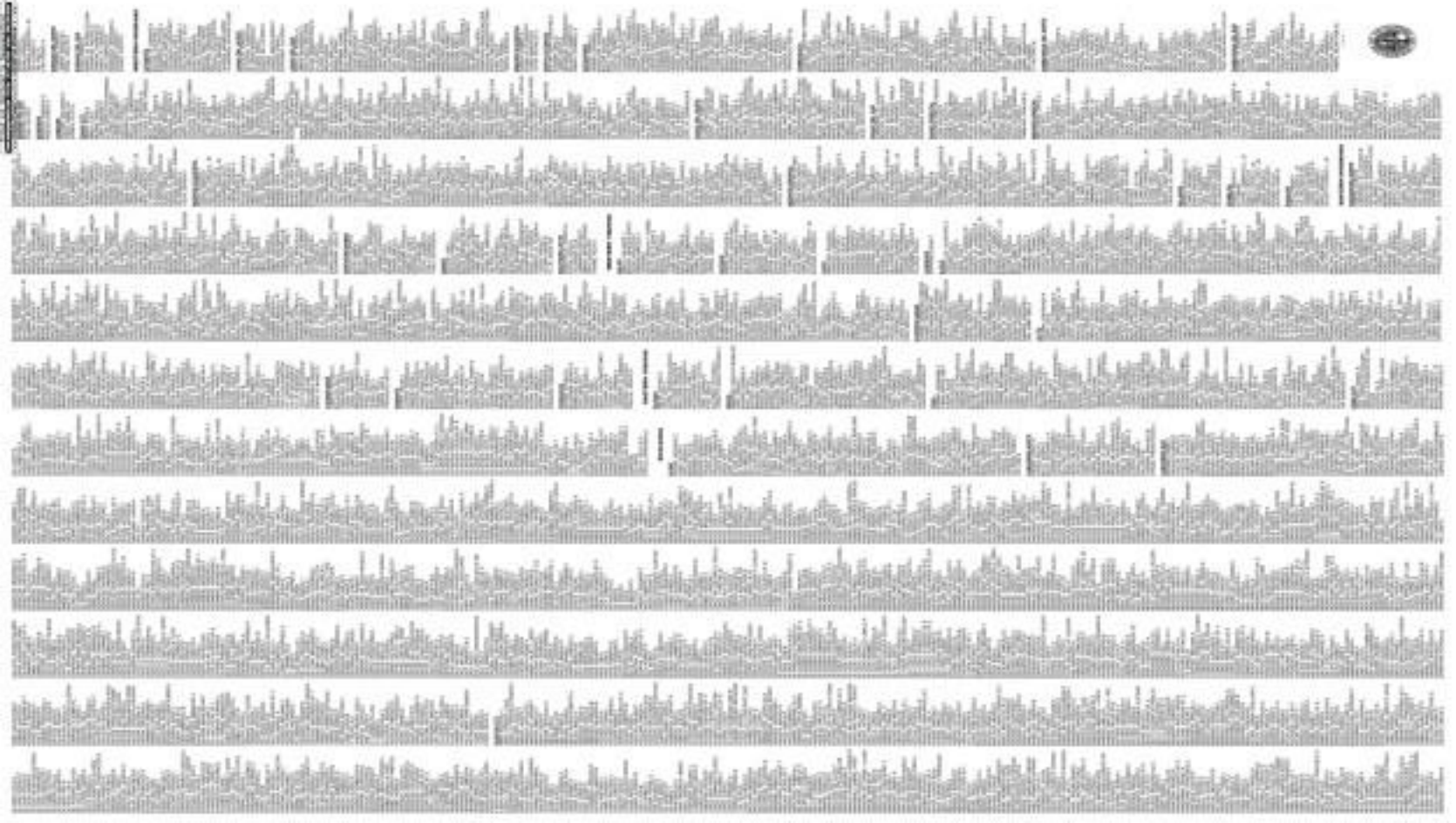
Integrated Bar of the Philippines

Records of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) reveal that the following lawyers have not updated their membership dues for three (3) consecutive years or more, as of June 13, 2007:

You are hereby given a period of seven (7) days from today, or until June 22, 2007, to update your membership dues. Otherwise, without further notice, IBP will initiate proceedings to drop you from the roll of attorneys. If you have already updated your membership dues, kindly disregard this notice.

– IBP Board of Governors
(2003-2007)





Across the NATION

Pangasinan suffers 10-hr outage, but told it's OK

BAGUIO CITY—THE CITY Mill Base Pangasinan town went through a 10-hour power outage on Thursday, disrupting operations in many offices and businesses established here.

But the National Transmission Corp. (Transco) assured residents here and in the towns of Urdaneta, Sta. Barbara, Binmaley and San Fabian that the ten-long power outage, which began at 8 a.m., was meant to prevent power interruptions in the future.

"This is just one of our scheduled regular maintenance works by the year to improve our service," said Garry Torres, manager of the Transco western Pangasinan branch in Urdaneta town.

This will be the second 11-hour power outage this year to give way to maintenance, according to Angnet Sumonte, operations manager of the Pangasinan Electric Coop., whose franchise areas were also hit by the power interruption.

Torres said that aside from shedding joints of their transmission lines stretching from Labrador to Calatrava, they also have to change old insulator poles with concrete or steel poles to facilitate power.

Aging poles

He said about 40 percent of the electric poles in the Urdaneta-Calatrava stretch were erected in the 1970s.

"We also have to tighten some bolts and nuts in our substations' terminal pads and ensure the avoidance of our facilities by the overgrowth of trees," Sumonte said.

This, he said, included the cutting up of structures to minimize the chance of direct electric power damage to the lightning.

Of the 600 banks, insurance companies and several dozens despite the use of a generator to power up lighting in some offices. The generator power was not enough to run office computers.

Several commercial centers have cancelled its class for the day. Banks, however, were open to those were equipped with generators.

In Lucena City, the local power cooperative is considering whether or not to continue buying power from the wholesale electricity spot market (Wesm) following price surges in the electricity that Wesm traded in May.

The Batangas Electric Electric Coop. receive has been flooded with consumers' complaints after power or bills of residential users suddenly ovaluated last month.

No choice

Domencio Layugan, Meralco's members services department manager, said the Coop was forced to charge high power bills because its consumers become those power rates had soared from P4.5/kwh in April to P6.52/kwh last month. The Wesm rate in March was only P1.97/kwh back.

But, a distribution utility here in power supply, which is finds to consumers from Meralco, the Batangas Power Coop., the Northwind Power Development Corp., (which produces power from wind turbines) and the cooperative itself. Its power rates had increased from P4.5/kwh in April to P6.52/kwh last month. The Wesm rate in March was only P1.97/kwh back.

Gabriel Cancilleron and Cristina Arpalan, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Police tag terror suspect out on bail in plot to use car bomb

SUBALLAH, SOUTH COTABATO—Police authorities said they had identified a bomb expert linked to the Jemaah Islamiyah as one of two men seen abandoning the car bomb here early Wednesday.

Supt. Roberto Almarinda, provincial police chief, said witnesses told law enforcers that one of the men had to amputated arm—which fitted the description of Fahri Ishul.

"A witness told our investigators that one the two men who left the 1977 Toyota sedan here around 1 a.m. Wednesday had only one arm," he said.

Almarinda said Ishul lost his right arm when the bomb he was about to plant in a crowded area in Koronadal City prematurely went off in 2003.

He was also the main suspect in the May 4 bombing in Tacurong City that killed eight people, including several children.

The car, packed with nearly 200 kilos, TNT and black powder smashed to a barrier operated trigger, was abandoned in the town's busiest intersection.

THE ORDAINED: Bomb that was rigged with explosives and which police said was intended to cause as many deaths as possible, being inspected by investigators in Tacurong, South Cotabato. ED regrets helped suspect a the second car bomb believed put together by militants with links to international terrorist groups.

PHOTO COURTESY OF INQUIRER MINDANAO

US help

Members of the police's canine and explosives unit, aided by US bomb experts, later determined the bomb's instruction said the bomb was so powerful that it could kill many people had it exploded.

US and Filipino bomb experts agreed that the composition of the bomb was something new el- Brought a similar car bomb was exploded in Magsaysaysay two months ago.

Almarinda said Ishul belonged to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), its allegation denied by the group's spokesperson.

"We belonge to the MILF. And he has links" with militants like the JI and Abu Sayyaf. He came from Maguindanao and he is targeting key areas in the region. We have tightened the security to prevent any attacks," he said.

Irresponsible

Bul Kabalu, MILF spokesperson, described Almarinda's statement irresponsible.

"We is not a member of our organization. But he has relations with the organization," he said.

Kabalu said Ishul had already been arrested but was freed on bail.

"Several years ago, he was involved in the bombing in Cotabato Airport City he was, he was arrested by the police and the militants but was able to post bail. And before leaves there," he said.

He urged authorities to be more circumspect, citing the result of the investigation that have it blast in the Mindanao bus terminal.

Kabalu said that shortly after the explosion, which injured 16 people, police immediately blamed "rogue MILF members with ties to JI" in the culprits.

"We already said we have no rogue members. We has time (Bobbit Bureau of Investigation) again helping in the investigation said it are not rogues attack," he said.

PSI agents had said the bomb-like trunk of "innocence."

Continuing threats

In Cotabato City, Eddie Kobalad, manager of Weena Bus Co., said the line continued to receive threats from an extortion group.

A letter signed by a certain Rasmiddeh was sent to three offices, warning of more explosions if the company failed to pay P2 million in protection money, he said.

Kobalad said the management decided to cut the number of established lines after the Cotabato-Davao route from 10 to only 20.

North Cotabato Gov. Emmylou Taliño said he directed police authorities to "double or triple the security measures to help protect passengers. *Jeoffrey Maitem with reports from Charlie Señase and Edith Regalado, Inquirer Mindanao*

Albay governor says he sees overprice in dredging

HUNDREDS of bodies continue to make their home One schools of some areas in Albay despite billions of pesos being spent on dredging and other projects supposedly for victims of typhoons and flooding in the province.

LEGAZPI CITY—ALBAY 1ST DISTRICT Rep. Joey Salceda questioned as "likely overpriced" the multimillion-peso dredging and earth-filling projects in the province and the P20-million repair of the city airport by the Department of Public Works and Highways.

The DPWH listed ten 47 ongoing initial or rehabilitation projects in Albay amounting to more than P 1.4 billion.

A total of P430 million, the biggest share, was allocated for river-safety dredging, river channelization, and earth-filling and revetment in three districts, a report he mailed the governor by the DPWH stated.

Other projects involved the repair, improvement, and reconstruction of roads amounting to P101 million, flood-control projects worth P 60 million, bridges, P74.3 million, and rehabilitation of dikes and river-control facilities, P79 million.

Governor said he was against the dredging activities since they only offered temporary solutions to labor and flooding hazards around Mt. Mayon.

"What we cannot see permanent flood control facilities such as dredging and earth-filling, which will all be useless when heavy rains come," he said.

He added that the slow spending of public funds by the DPWH should be a cause for concern by the public since "the amounts allotted for the projects are reasonable."

Cost of dredging and earth-filling projects ranged from P4 million to P40 million.

Based on records obtained by Cosmiano in the three-fifths projects in 9 April 25, a dredging project in San Francisco River Channels, Guinobatan, Albay, was 75 percent completed, while the whole programmed amount of P30.1 million released already.

It was a negotiated contract, meaning there was no bidding.

Another project is the rehabilitation and reconfiguration of Lower Bañag Barbalio in Bañag, Albay city, under a negotiated contract worth P225 million. Some P90 million was released as of April 25, with 80.5-percent completion.

Still another project was the P20.3-million rehabilitation of Santo River under a negotiated contract. As of April 25, it was 56.86-percent completed.

Orlando Bueta, DPWH regional director in Bicol, told the Inquirer that the dredging activities were necessary and were even recommended by the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council and the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology.

"Some people doubt if we are doing the right things, but we first had to remove the volcanic debris deposited in the rivers and strengthen river channels before we could put up solid structures like permanent flood-control facilities," Bueta said.

He added that the DPWH had to identify the "weak points" of the river channels that could cause flooding. These will be where the permanent flood-control structures will be built, he said.

Bueta said the amount allotted for dredging was reasonable and dependent on the length and width of the rivers, and the volume of debris deposits. *Ephraim Aguilan, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Protesting workers threaten to paralyze power plant

By Dello Maluenda
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LUCBAN (UT)—PROTESTING workers from the 735-megawatt coal-fired Mirant power plant in Barangay Ibabang Iyam wanted their demands managements to agreed their demand for separation pay, they would be forced to paralyze plant operations but could cause widespread blackout in the entire Luzon.

Following the other power plants receiving Luzon grid could not cope with the demands, the resulting domino effect could trigger a total blackout in the entire Luzon area," Ogie Abalos, spokesperson of the Kaisahan ng Manggagawa sa Pagbilao Power Station (KMPPS), told the Inquirer.

He added that the workers were ready to face the consequences of their protest action. "Negotiation is over. They already ignored us. Now is the time for us to act to protect our collective interest as workers."

He said once the last executive order issued by the group's spokesperson.

"We believe that the power plant would be paralyzed starting 00:00 day.

Mirant power production accounts for at least 25 percent of the electric demands of the entire Luzon grid, according to Abalos.

At least 200 plant workers—technicians, office staff members and laborers—staged a protest action at the plant gate in Barangay Ibabang Iyam in Lucban on yesterday.

Earlier, the workers all wore white shirts, painted with "Magkaisa Para sa Kinabukasan ng Lahat" on their and "2.15" at the back, on board several vehicles and motorcycles. They mounted a 10-kilometer motorcade from Pagbilao town proper to the plant gate.

Teodoro Gonzaga, KMPPS president, in a statement disclosed that on Dec. 11, 2006, Mirant entered into a sale and purchase agreement with Consolidated Holdings Co. Inc., a joint venture between Tokyo Electric Power Co. (Tepco) and Marubeni Corp.

While the agreement deals with the sale of the coal-fired power unit only of Mirant in the Philippine Estate, he claimed that in reality, the contract was a sale of the entire business of Mirant to another entity that would have vast investment and facilities.

The company has insisted that there would be no termination of employment as there was no need for them to pay separation benefits.

In a letter from Consolidated Holdings Co. Inc. to the workers, dated June 12 and addressed to all power plant employees, the business company headed by Lucio "Tan" Tan contended that the sale of the unit, Mirant Philippines, Mirant Pagbilao and Mirant Sual, all will continue to be your employers."

The business tried to counter Jose Lovaton, Mirant chair and chief executive officer, through his mobile phone but it just kept on ringing.

According to Mirant, the company was sold for a price of $1.4 billion, plus working capital.

Saudi burial for OFW adds grief to family

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CUACUA, PAMPANGA—THE RITUALS BE the wife and children of beheaded overseas worker Reynaldo Cortez in Philippine embassies to bring home his remains from Saudi Arabia were in tonight on Thursday.

Esteban Conejos, foreign undersecretary for migrant affairs, has informed Cortez's wife Melody by phone that "in respect of laws and customs in Saudi Arabia, a convict after his execution must be immediately buried in an unmarked grave."

"We cannot repatriate his remains. I do not think we can bring home the body," Conejos have confirmed to the business.

Asked if clear was on account of him being a convict or his killers, Conejos could not say since he is not in the know, Conejos could not say since because of the laws and limited contacts for outsiders in that Middle East Kingdom.

After the call by Conejos, Melody left the veranda, walked inside the family's 4 x 5 meter house, slumped on a plastic chair and withdrew into silence in front of an altar where her six children had lit thin white candles beside the four photographs of their father.

Wake

It appeared to be the closest thing they could do to appreciate in order to realize for him.

Cortez, 41, was beheaded by sword in a Riyadh jail last Wednesday for the murder of a Bahraini taxi driver who reportedly tried to rape him in 2000.

Melody, 37, held back words and tears. She wished her hands not be left hand, an audience and tape showed through her face.

Denied by most of not being able to see their father even on his death, Cortez's children—Cydie, 14; April, 17; the twins Allan and Allen, 14; and Ace, 8—stared blank at their father's photographs. Allen, the oldest, slept his sadness away.

Tough question

Cydie broke the silence by asking, "Are we not really going to be able to bury him here?"

Melody grew to answer: its how before Conejos broke the news she told the tearful his remains were home so his children could have time to pay their last respects to him.

In the cramped sala, April let out a painful wail. "We wanted for him for nine years and we can't get to see him for the last time?" she said.

Throughout the waiting, Cortez had stayed in touch with them sensationally by calling Sirah through borrowed mobile phones.

He last called them on June 10 or death on April's health. Ace, the youngest, had never seen his father in person. He was still in his mother's womb when Cortez left in 1998 to work as a welder in a car workshop.

The wedding happened on May 12, 2006, when Cortez was finished with his contract and was bound for home. Melody said. Since then, she has been tentatively around the child, first by selling rice and clothes.

Answers

In April's query, Melody said: "We will tell my."

Earlier that morning though, at around 8 a.m., she got answers from Mayor Nicandro Rivera that the DFA, on the requests of Malacañang and President Macapagal-Arroyo's son, Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel Arroyo, would carry efforts to repatriate the remains.

Mayor Intercontinental Chair Cortez this gas Regalado said that the call by Conejos to Melody made it clear that the family's appeals have gone futile.

Regalado said Migrante was taking the case to the International Human rights community as "total injustice" for Cortez.

Melody maintained that her husband was innocent and that he nabbed the victim to death out of self-defense.

Conejos said the DFA discovery means to save Cortez from the death row since 2000. She hoped she said the government had not fully explored negotiations with the Saudi Arabia monarchy.

"(The DFA) got stuck on offering blood money or asking for forgiveness. It was afraid to strain diplomatic relations [with Saudi Arabia] in consideration of the opportunities in the labor market," she said.

"Ang feeling ni Bey pinabayaan siya ng gob

Group eyes Cory family hacienda in SC decision

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—THE SUPREME Court decision that sugar lands remained within the coverage of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) should speed up the distribution of lands within the Hacienda Luisita in Tarlac, the Housing Urban-housing Pilipinas said.

The 6,453-hectare Hacienda Luisita is a sugar estate owned by the family of former President Corazon Aquino.

The ruling, made on March 30 and posted on the court's website on Monday, "should pave the way for the hastening of sugar lands to farm workers like that in Hacienda Luisita, Hacienda Nito Mobaja and other sugar plantations nationwide that are unjustly covered by landlords against distribution," Danilo Ramos, KMP secretary general, said in a statement here.

Ramos [name illegible] must be "several and land reconcile deals [be studied]." Rosario Ocampo, Inquirer Central Luzon

RELATIVES, friends and members of Migrante International hold a candlelight vigil for Phillina Ramos, a Filipino migrant worker on death row in Kuwait. Relatives of other OFWs on death row in Saudi Arabia joined the candlelight vigil. AFP/YASSER

ANY SPECIAL ELECTIONS MUST BE MEANINGFUL, TRUTHFUL AND FREE!

The Comelec must take all steps necessary to uphold and protect the right to vote of the people of Maguindanao. We believe there is strong evidence to support the feeling that there was probably a failure of elections in Maguindanao or that elections did not take place in many areas in the province. Should Comelec call for special elections, it must ensure that the elections are meaningful, truthful, and free.

Any special elections will require, among other steps, measures to address the lack of credibility of local Comelec officials. The loss of the certificates of canvass in their custody, documents which are crucial to prove that elections did take place in the province, has put their competence, independence, and integrity into grave doubt. Even if all the documents later show up intact, they can only be treated with great suspicion of having been altered and manipulated.

Special elections will also require steps to address the climate of fear and insecurity, which prevails in the province. The recent killing of a Maguindanao teacher, allegedly for exposing electoral fraud in his municipality, has only served to heighten this fear and insecurity, especially among teachers in the province. The situation is not helped by the fact that hundreds of firearms have reportedly been issued to paramilitary units under the control of provincial officials led by Governor Ampatuan, and exempted from the Comelec gun ban.

Meaningful, truthful and free elections cannot be held in Maguindanao under these circumstances. Rather, it can only take place if the following steps are taken by the Comelec, the PNP/AFP and the government, as the case may be:

a. Cancel all gun permits, disarm the paramilitary units in the province and dismantle all vestiges of any machinery for electoral manipulation.
b. Deploy units of the Philippine Marines throughout the province to ensure peace and order, including the safety of the voters, election officials and citizen volunteers.
c. Replace local Comelec officials with trusted Comelec personnel from other areas.
d. Count ballots in safe and secure areas.
e. Ensure the effective participation of Comelec citizens arms and full media coverage of the elections, and
f. Undertake adequate voter's education activities before the elections.

If the Comelec decides to hold special elections, the people of Maguindanao should be able to exercise their right to vote free of violence or threats thereof, or of retribution or of manipulative interference of any kind.

Finally, as soon as the elections are over, the Comelec and the government must act swiftly to hold all those who have committed violations of election laws, including members of the Comelec itself, administratively and criminally accountable.

The Comelec also owes the public an explanation as to why those officials with a cloud of suspicion on wholesale fraud in 2004 were not removed or transferred from their positions in such places as Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur, in the interest of prudent and effective management.

The Comelec and the government have an opportunity to help restore the trustworthiness of the electoral process by making an example of Maguindanao. We earnestly urge them to vigorously pursue this course and offer our services, together with our partners, in helping attain this objective.

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Cops want to give to poor rice linked to poll fraud

BILIS, DAVE—THE PROVINCIAL POLICE director has asked the protected prosecutor on Tuesday for permission to dispose of more than 1,000 sacks of rice that a losing congress. dional candidate allegedly intended to use to buy votes in the May 14 polls.

In his petition, Senior Supt. Fidel Pasadas said he feared that the thousands of kilograms of rice would only be left rotting if they would not be disposed of properly in the next few days.

He submitted that his office lacked the facility and space to properly keep the confiscated rice.

The sacks of rice are still loaded on a stalled dump truck allegedly used by outgoing Senior Mayor Jessie Castillo's men to distribute the items to voters. The truck remains impounded at Camp General Pantaleon Garcia here.

Castillo, who lost in the congressional race against reelectionist Rep. Joseph Emilio Abaya, denied the allegations.

He accused Pasadas and his men of harassing him and his supporters as have fielded the still, who won over the mayor's wife Rhinzva to Abaya.

"I think it would be better if we start distributing the rice to charitable institutions. In that way, we can help more people than just leave it to the molds," Pasadas told the hesitant to act interview on Tuesday.

Pasadas expressed optimism that the case against Castillo would prosper in court after the provincial prosecutor's office forwarded the police complaint of electioneering against Castillo to the Office of the Ombudsman.

He said few witnesses had admitted that they received rice rations from Castillo in exchange for their votes.

"We have enough evidence against Mayor Castillo to prove that he used the rice to buy votes in the elections," he said. "We also expect the Ombudsman to release a statement of action regarding this case."

Alarilan Barrios, Inquirer Southern Luzon

INDEPENDENCE
A Philippine flag flies near a statue of Emilio Aguinaldo, who declared Philippine independence on June 12, 1898, in Kawit, Cavite. Kawit has been a secondary site of Independence Day celebrations.

Gunmen bomb 8th power transmission tower in Mindanao

ILIGAN CITY—UNIDENTIFIED ARMED MEN bombed yet another tower of the National Transmission Corp. (Transco), the eighth such structure attacked in Mindanao since March.

Antonio Chavez, a department manager of Transco here, said the latest target was tower No. 46 in Iponan-Iligan, Lanao del Sur that connected the Abuga line in Baloi, Lanao del Norte to the Kibawe line in Bukidnon.

Jhavez said the bomb attack, the second this month, occurred 10 p.m. on Wednesday.

On Tuesday evening, a Transco tower in Barangay Poppoyanan in Bacolod-Lanao del Norte was also bombed by unidentified perpetrators.

SPO4 Myrna Bejar, acting chief of the Bacolod police, said the perpetrators used four 60-mm mortar shells in the raid based but only two exploded.

In both attacks, Chavez said only some areas suffered from power disruptions. Power in other areas was restored.

Chavez said if a steel tower suffers a major damage, Transco has to replace it, which costs more than P1 million.

"But if a toppled tower is reconstructed using existing materials, it will cost more than P500,000 excluding labor," he said.

Asked who could be behind the attacks on Transco towers, Chavez said they could be criminal elements.

He said they have been receiving extortion letters, which Transco management have been ignoring for years.

Jhavez said the latest was the one sent by a Commander Mahawak, who was asking P5 million in protection money per month.

But he said Mahawak did not mention which group he belongs to.

In the past, rebel leaders identified with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) have ordered attacks on power lines because of the government's alleged failure to compensate Muslims for the use of Lake Lanao and the Maria Cristina Falls here.

The government's hydropower facilities, which supplies about 30 percent of Mindanao's power needs, are powered by water from Lake Lanao and Maria Cristina. Rachel Ward, Inquirer Mindanao

Cops sue Roxas City-based recruiter for bogus jobs

By Felipa V. Collos
Inquirer Visayas

ROXAS CITY—THE CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION and Detection Group (CIDG) filed illegal recruitment and estafa charges against a travel agency that allegedly duped four persons who were promised work in Macau.

Roxas Travel and Tours Agency (RTTA), with an office in Magallanes Street here, was accused of facilitating the departure of the three victims to Macau after they paid "placement" fees ranging from P50,000 to P75,000, according to the complaint filed by the CIDG in the city prosecutor's office yesterday.

Moreover, they later learned that not only were there no jobs waiting for them in Macau, but they had to return home empty-handed because their tickets were already about to expire. They had entered the former Portuguese colony as tourists.

Lawyer Daniel Catrapeña, who represented RTTA, said in radio interviews that RTTA was a travel agency and not a "recruitment agency. He said the agency did not promise jobs.

He said the applicants went to Macau as tourists and had the opportunity to look for jobs. The amounts paid by the clients were for their passports and lodging in Macau, he said.

It was the clients' responsibility to look for jobs there, he said.

Named respondents in the complaint were Maudie Sawmad, registered owner of RTTA; his branch manager Maria Cristina Mejar; and staff member Arlene Padual, according to CIDG investigators SPO1 William Limpoco.

Nurse charge

RTTA has since been renamed Sir Gaa Dia. covery Travel and Tours and moved its office from Magallanes Street to Roxas Avenue, the CIDG said.

The CIDG conducted the investigation based on the complaint filed by Jay Palabrigan, 27; of Poblacion Norte; Claudette Cardenosa, 27, of Barangay Culibas; and Rubimelyn Marie Rivera, 26, of Poblacion Sur, all of Pilar, Capiz; and Rowena Feliz, 25, of Barangay Tanque, Roxas City.

Rivera said Mejar and Padual convinced her to work in Macau supposedly as a bona fide officer of Manila's hotel and asked her to pay P75,000 in placement fee.

She paid the fee in three installments before the left for Macau on board Macau Airways on Nov. 14, 2006. With her was Catrapeña, who had paid P50,000 with the promise to pay the remaining P25,000 from her salary there.

Rivera said she and Catrapeña stayed at Dominica's house in Chico Dicks, Las Pinas City while waiting for their departure.

They were met at the Macau airport by Ernesto Bacudoro and a certain "Kuya Bernie" who were from Cebu City, Rivera said. The two were also recruited by RTTA, she said.

Gov willing to shed light on elections

COMPOSTELA—MAGUINDANAO Gov. Datu Andal Ampatuan and other elected local officials are willing to show up before the National Board of Canvassers, his spokesperson said yesterday.

Norie Unas, who is also the provincial administrator, told Inquirer.net that Ampatuan and the other officials were willing to defend their win in the Senate of Board that allegedly took place in Maguindanao during the May 14 balloting.

The controversy was sparked by the 12-0 sweep of the Team Unity ticket in the senatorial elections and zero votes for at least 19 senatorial candidates.

Some teachers, who served as members of the board of election inspectors, claimed that no elections took place in the province and that armed men filled out ballots on behalf of the administration slate.

The claims was denied by Ampatuan and other provincial officials, saying the 'O sweep was the result of consultation with residents.

Ampatuan's camp has said that in Maguindanao, command votes exist.

The controversy deepened when election documents to prove that elections indeed took place went missing.

Jimmy Bachil, provincial election supervisor, said the documents had been stolen from the provincial capitol in Shariff Aguak, which was heavily guarded, but he could not say how.

Unas said Ampatuan was willing to show light on the controversy so that the governor was only waiting for the advice of his lawyers.

"He would like to clear all gary areas during the past polls. We are still conferring with our lawyers," Unas said.

Asked if Ampatuan would attend Friday's hearing of the election controversy, Unas said it might not happen yet.

Lawyers will represent Ampatuan and other officials when the Comelec resumes its investigation of the alleged Maguindanao poll fraud, he said.

Unas said the governor had yet to receive the Comelec summons. "We only hear about it from the media," he said.

He reiterated that election took place in the province and that it had been the most peaceful political exercise to date.

"So far as the elected officials are concerned, they believe they were legally elected and proclaimed," Unas said.

Police have formed a task force that will look into the June 9 murder of Maguindanao school supervisor Musa Al-mantilang.

Mamalinding was one of those who signed a statement about election fraud in Maguindanao town. He was shot dead by unidentified armed men outside his home in Pilar, North Cotabato on last Friday. Inquirer Mindanao

Trillanes to probe AFP death squads

From page 1

archive of the planned inquiry.

"We should look as much as possible at an independent body to conduct the probe," the AFP's ... The ubiquitous fear it is behind those hit-and-run killers have putting the AFP in a bad light," he said.

Trillanes said sweeping statements blaming the military for the political killings and forced disappearances were unfair because these do not reflect the "realities on the ground."

He said the so-called "death squads" or special teams assigned to carry out political killings and clandestine tasks were usually "composed of people from the intelligence community, including intelligence units from each major service command.

"These teams are above the regular units. If they, they are utilized on a case-by-case basis," he said.

Oplan Greenhaus

Trillanes said he would also seek investigation into the supposed involvement of the troops who undertook the cleaning sector in Mindanao, as alleged in the Oplan Greenhaus document.

Trillanes said the height of the Oakwood mutiny in July 2003.

The document supposedly provides a detailed account of why even managers were being subjected to intimidation.

"The JAG Act is not responsible for conducting the investigation," said Trillanes, who participated in an "impeach-GMA" plan forum.

He said the Oplan Greenhaus document would likewise explain why he got high votes in the Muslim areas in Mindanao. "He knew some of the issue with them, they have refused I denied."

According to Trillanes, "not one group can claim credit" for his good showing in the senatorial elections.

He denied a military report naming the Magdalo group as Pinklabber as Magdalo group as Filipinos. [EDIT] as scandal in connecting his victory.

"The [EDIT] may have helped, and also the Black and White Movement, the Poe [during Manong Erap], and society, the at least part

NEWS

Jalosjos was good, prisons chief says

By Julie M. Aurelio

CONVICTED RAPIST ROMEO Jalosjos will not be moving out of maximum security prison despite a Wednesday order reducing his sentence to 10 years.

Prison Director Vicente Ymutan said the ex-congressman will remain in the maximum security detention area of the New Bilibid Prisons and will observe the same routine that he has been following for the past 12 years.

"We will also impose the same security measures. There will be no change," Ymutan said.

Prison sources initially said Jalosjos might be transferred to the minimum or medium security enclosure of the administration.

On Tuesday, Malacañang announced the commutation of Jalosjos' two life terms to 10 years, 3 months and 2 days based on a recommendation of the Board of Pardons and Parole.

"His evaluation for the past few years has been generally good, thus his term was commutated to be consumed," Ymutan said.

Jalosjos did not commit any violations during his stay in the NBP. He followed the rules and regulations inside the prison. It was on this basis that he was recommended [for commutation]," he added.

Jalosjos was convicted in 1997 for two counts of statutory rape and six counts of acts of lasciviousness under the Revised Penal Code. His victim was an 11-year-old girl.

He was initially sentenced to two life terms and was ordered to pay P600,000 in civil indemnity and P400,000 in moral damages.

In December 2004, Jalosjos' mother made a personal appeal to President Macapagal-Arroyo to grant her son a presidential pardon after he was brought to the hospital complaining of chest pains.

Jalosjos, 56, will not be eligible to apply for a pardon until he reaches 70.

According to initial estimates by prison officials, following the commutation, Jalosjos will have served his sentence by November 2008.

As of May 30, 2007, Jalosjos has already served, with allowances for good behavior, a total of 11 years, 5 months and 15 days, prison sources said.

Ymutan explained that if a prisoner's behavior is good during the period of evaluation, he or she is given what is called a good conduct time allowance of 15 days. This means the sentence he is to serve is reduced by 15 days.

The Inquirer tried to contact the ex-congressman but was told that Jalosjos has refused to talk to the press.

FACE OFF

Speaker Jose de Venecia raises the hand of his counterpart for the opposition, Cebu Rep. Pablo Garcia, during a courtesy handshake encounter Wednesday night at the wake of Rose Arantia, grandmother of Sen. Mar Roxas, who was buried yesterday. The two rivals, both bets in the bid to succeed President Macapagal-Arroyo, arrived separately at the Roxas-na-Pati, the Arantes residence, in Cubao.

Aplus METRO
Editor Ester G. Dipasupil

JOB IN PERIL

Pasay fireman may face charges for opening parcel

By Julie M. Aurelio

TWO FIREMEN WERE CAUGHT ON CAMERA OPENING A PARCEL DURING the fire that razed the Philpost building in Pasay City near their administrative and criminal charges.

He may also lose his job if found guilty.

The fire, which could have been caused by faulty electrical wiring, destroyed more than P5 million worth of property.

FIO Nicky Catubena, a member of the Pasay City fire department, was ordered to explain in writing why he had opened a package at the Customs section while the Philippine Postal Office was on fire.

"We gave him 72 hours to air his side," Supt. Jofio Mendoza, fire marshall of the Southern Police District, told the Inquirer in a phone interview.

Caught on camera

Catubena and two other unidentified firefighters were caught by a television camera trying to open the package. The officers were reportedly members of Pasay volunteer brigades.

The Philpost building on Buendia Road caught fire at around 11:23 p.m. Tuesday and was put out nearly four hours later after receiving the second alarm.

Though firefighters are expected to salvage valuables, they are supposed to hand these over to the proper authorities and not open them.

Mendoza said the district's bureau of Fire Protection had yet to see the footage in question.

He said that based on Catubena's explanations, they would decide whether or not to file charges against him.

Dismissal

"Probable, we will file charges for conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service and grave misconduct," she said. The charges are punishable by dismissal from government service.

If dismissed, Catubena will no longer be eligible for any government job. He will also have to forfeit whatever benefits may be due him.

The district fire marshal said the BOC, which was conducting an issue investigation, could also file criminal charges against the Pasay City firefighter for opening the parcel.

"The two volunteer firemen, if convicted, face criminal cases as they are not employees of the bureau.

"The BFP has already ordered our internal affairs section to conduct an investigation into the matter before we turn over the penalty to Catubena," Mendoza added.

Mike Arroyo drops libel suit vs Tulfos

By Marguie C. Ortiz

MIKE ARROYO, HUSBAND OF President Maria Arroyo, has asked the court to dismiss the libel case he filed against the brothers Ramon, Sally and Erwin Tulfo.

In a motion filed in a Quezon City Regional Trial Court, Arroyo said he was no longer interested in pursuing the case.

Judge Ralph Lee of the QC RTC Branch 83 would decide on the motion, filed through Arroyo's lawyer Ray Oliveros Bandoria, in a scheduled hearing on June 27.

In his affidavit of desistance, Arroyo maintained that he "never seriously sustained" his moral life-threatening medical conditions through the prayers and support of family and friends.

"Because I have been generously given a second lease on life, I have decided to forgive every one who has caused me pain. I am no longer interested in pursuing the case," Arroyo said.

The President's husband filed the libel case against the brothers last year, accusing them of maligning with him similar to published malicious allegations against him in the People's Journal newspapers.

Arroyo said the Tulfos suspected him of having caused the cancellation of their television program "Isumbong Ito" on Tulfo 6 in August.

The Journal newspaper columnist quoted the Tulfos as saying Arroyo precipitated the TV network's general manager, Lorenzo Limos, not to renew their contract after they denounced suspected smuggling activities of the then president's alleged girlfriend Vicky Toh.

"The offended party was indicted in the columns as a protector of illegal activities, and the story gave the public impression that Arroyo was secretly safe as he is president's real spouse," Assistant City Prosecutor Ilse Bautista said in his resolution in January.

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Ruffa, children get police security detail

RUFFA GUTIERREZ leaves the office of Gabriela, a militant women's organization. The actress, who alleged she was a battered wife, sought support from the group in a meeting with Gabriela officers yesterday

By Alcuin Papa

CEBU "GINEL DANIELS" is legally free but estranged husband Vhong Solon, movie star Ruffa Gutierrez was given three police bodyguards by the Philippine National Police for her protection.

Chief Supt. Jocelyn Odtuhan said yesterday the policemen would guard the actress and the couple's two daughters, Lorin, 3, and Venice, 2. "Solon can hire anyone to do harm to Ruffa and her children, "Odtuhan said.

The police official said Gutierrez sent a written request for police security to PNP Chief Director General Oscar Calderon on Wednesday.

In the letter, Odtuhan said that it was "getting grave threats" from Solon and was "afraid for her safety."

Yesterday, at around 11 a.m., Gutierrez's mother Annabelle Rama went to Odtuhan's office to meet their escort. "The threat level is high. So I gave her three security men," Odtuhan said, adding that they would continue to assess the situation.

The movie star came, with tanks of Police Officer 2 and Senior Police Officer 1, had been to the service for at least 10 years and "is professional" in providing close in security to VIPs, Odtuhan said.

"They are experienced and ready to give their lives for Ruffa and her two daughters. I can vouch for their experience and capabilities. If Ruffa doesn't like their faces, she may change them," he said. The three were personally assigned to guard Sen. Rodolfo Biazon. For security reasons, Odtuhan did not reveal the names of the guards.

He said the three would wear civilian clothes if they carried short firearms, and police uniforms when carrying high-powered automatic guns.

Odtuhan said the bodyguards would stay with Gutierrez children and her guests for at least one month. He said Rama promised to take care of the officers' meals.

Solon, who married Gutierrez in Manila in 2003, had reportedly threatened to take his own daughters with him.

Last month, Gutierrez announced she and Solon were ending their marriage. Gutierrez alleged her husband beat her while Solon said he had enough of her partying.

Reports also surfaced that she married a richest Latino in 2006 in Las Vegas, Nevada. The actress said Solon knew about the marriage.

METROBRIEFS

San Juan plebiscite

PROMISING co-aspirants for the town's San Juan Mayor Joseph Victor Ejercito ampelitan have names to vote for this Saturday's plebiscite on the municipality into a city in a measure by Senators. The San Juan Highland MP was authored by San Juan Rep. Ronaldo Zamora and Senators Joggy Ejercito, who also served as mayor of the town, and Antonio Trillanes. Incoming Manila mayor Lito Atienza said children would receive a higher budgetary allocations for San Juan from the national government's Internal Revenue Allotment. The municipality of San Juan's component of 21 barangays. *Kristine C. Alave*

Baywalk displays out

REPLICAS of the Good Whale shark and Tyrannosaurus Rex will no longer be familiar features at the Baywalk along Roxas Boulevard in Manila after its owners had threats to evacuate. Bongsying Marcelo Bay in Olongapo said the "artistic owner," who built the animal displays for fun in the city government, considered a politicians' sentiment it could not be related to the current city administration, included in October 2006, around 12 dinosaur figures were removed along with the shark. Olongapo declined to name the owner of the figures, and only said the company was the same supplier to the Dinoyland theme park. The mayor said that while many enjoyed the displays, "a small number hated it." The owner's e-mail and the Manila home had no political color, he added. *Alliance M. Cayon*

Jeepney fare hearing

THE LAND Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) has scheduled a hearing on June 28 for the proposed reduction of minimum jeepney fares to P7.50 instead of the existing and proposed group seeking a minimum fare of P7.50 to the National Capital Region, and Central and Southern Luzon. The minimum was lowered to P7 in three regions last year on their prices stabilized. The fare cut was done in response to stable fuel prices. The jeepney groups, however, said fuel prices have gone up on some the cost, calling for "a more small" profit margins for drivers and operators. *Alex T. Gonzaga*

Burger chain outlets face closure for lack of permit

By Margaux C. Ortiz

SEVERAL OUTLETS of a popular burger chain were ordered by the Quezon City government to secure business permits or face closure.

Noli Lim, Market Development and Administration Department (MDAD) chief, said only 15 of 46 Burger Machine outlets had business permits.

He warned Gilmore Food Corporation, which operates Burger Machine outlets, to comply immediately with provisions of the city's market code or avoid penalty.

In a letter to Gilmore president Nora Aquila, Lim gave the company 10 days to comply with the order or face "legal action and the immediate closure, demolition or removal of their stalls if the residence so warrant."

Lim said that as of June 4, the MDAD had issued a total of 214 stop and desist orders against Gilmore.

"However, the firm has defied the order because all the outlets we have issued desist despised the same day," Lim said in a statement.

He said Gilmore Food Corporation had to settle with the city over P10 million in debts.

Gilmore's officials could be fined from P1,000 to P5,000 or face imprisonment for one month or both for the operation of outlets without permits.

"We are looking into allegations that some Burger Machine operators have been photocopying paid invoices and using them to other outlets to avoid settling their obligations with the city government," Lim added.

He said they were also coordinating with health officials after receiving reports that many Burger Machine employees had no sanitary and occupational permits.

"The MDAD classifies these fast food outlets as hawkers for occupying sidewalks and sidewalks," Lim said.

The department tried to get Aquila's side but her secretary said she and other Gilmore officials were in a meeting.

Lim said they had also started issuing closure orders against public and private markets and terminals without business permits.

The categories included slaughterhouses operating illegally, he said.

DID YOU KNOW

SEE the 100 of the Philippine Commission established on June 11, 1901 the Supreme Court, which holds judicial power. Its first chief justice was Cayetano Arellano. Jose P. Laurel, before becoming President, acted as chief justice of the Supreme Court. The high court currently holds office on Padre Faura St. in Ermita. *Khrizia Cyril C. Rosaleen, Inquirer Research*

Boratongs lived lush life, says cops' star witness

By Kristine L. Alave

THE BORATONG COUPLE LIVED the lifestyle of the rich and famous, government witness Samuel Pelaez told the court yesterday as he listed the properties the Boratongs allegedly acquired while at the forefront of illegal drug operations in Pasig City.

Testifying at the Pasig City Regional Trial Court, Pelaez, Boratong's right hand man until he turned star witness for the police, said alleged drug lord Aron Boratong and his wife Glenda, maintained eight bank accounts in the Equitable PCI Bank. "Boratong had four bank accounts while his wife also had four," he added.

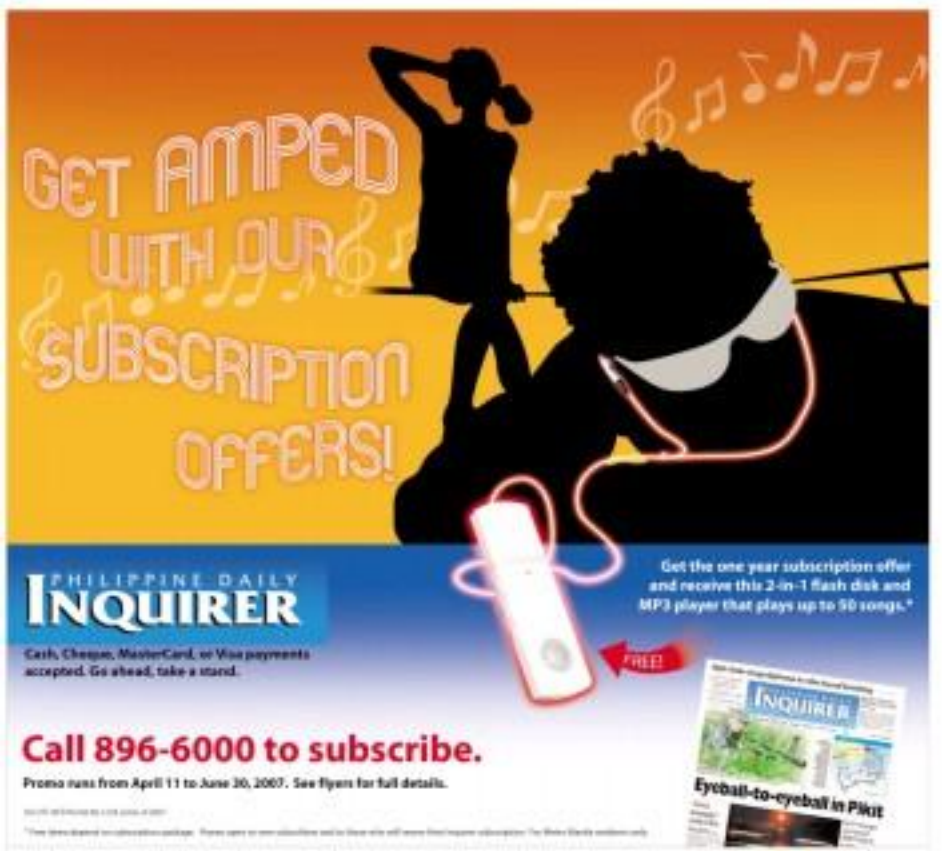
The couple also bought houses, lots, and new mills in Bulacan, Bohol, Marawi City and Switzerland, Pasig City said citained Samuel's sister Trazon Prado, Honda CRV, Cadillac, two Hummers, each Toyota Land Cruiser, a Ford Everest and a Mitsubishi Montero.

Pelaez alleged the couple also gave him millions as part of his "bonus." In 2003, he said he was able to buy a house and lot, as well as a Honda CRV with money from the couple's drug income.

In 2006, Pelaez said the Boratongs served him P4.6 million in an account set up by his wife in Equitable PCI Bank.

With Pelaez's new statements, the prosecution sought to establish that he was under Boratong's employ as mention that is being challenged by the defense.

Boratong allegedly owned the 2,000-square meter compound of shabu mills in Pasig City demolished in a raid in 2006. The couple, however, said it was Pelaez who operated shabu den to decrease his former in the city.



HAMAS militants take a rotside and weapons from the headquarters of the security forces loyal to President Mahmoud Abbas June 15.

Hamas seizes broad control in Gaza Strip

JERUSALEM...HAMAS FORCES consolidated control over much of Gaza on Wednesday, taking command of the main north-south road and forcing up a Fatah headquarters in Khan Yunis, in southern Gaza.

In northern Gaza and Gaza City, Hamas militias were, many of them in black masks, seized unchallenged through the streets as Fatah fighters ran short of arms and ammunition and abandoned their posts. Hamas controlled all of Gaza City except for the presidential compound of Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah and the Hamas headquarters of the National Security Forces, the Palestinian Army. Hamas has surrounded Al Sarayа, calling on the occupants to surrender.

The power Fatah leaves in now its real authority in Gaza, and the poor performance and motivation of the larger security forces supposedly loyal to Fatah, raises troubling questions for Abbas and Israel, and means the United States with a dwindling menu of policy options.

Abbas faces the collapse of his full power in Gaza and a possible Palestinian state divided into a West Bank run by Fatah and a Gaza "Hamastan," to use a Palestinian coinage.

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel accused of "engineered consequences" if Gaza fell under the complete control of Hamas, an Islamist movement that does not recognize Israel's right to exist. Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni said Hamas control of Gaza would force a Israel's ability to negotiate with Abbas, as Washington wants.

Hamas spokespersons said the movement had no political goal except to defend itself from a group within Fatah collaborating with Israel and the United States. They said they wanted to bring the security forces under the control of the new government, in which Fatah agreed to play a part until the current fighting.

Some Israeli security officials say Israel wants to see the West Bank isolated from Gaza, even more so with Hamas in control there. One official suggested that Hamas' show of strength in Gaza would make it more likely that the Israeli military would intervene there—but reporters on the Israeli military posts on the Israeli security service say Hamas, which is able to smuggle weapons and explosives from Egypt, is developing a sophisticated army on the model of Hezbollah in southern Lebanon. NYT

COMBINATION of three images shows the stages of destruction of the Askariya Shrine in Samarra, Iraq. From top to bottom: A February 2004 photo of the shrine, the shrine in February 2006 following an explosion which destroyed its dome, and a June 13 view after insurgents blew up its two minarets.

Vatican halts aid to Amnesty over abortion issue

VATICAN CITY—THE VATICAN ON Wednesday said it was suspending all financial aid to Amnesty International and urged all Catholics to stop supporting the human rights group, accusing it of promoting abortion.

"We must Catholic financing of Amnesty International after the organization's pro-abortion choice turn," said a statement from the Pontifical Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace.

The council's president, Cardinal Renato Martino, said the "suspension of all financing of Amnesty by Catholic organizations and by individuals" is the "inevitable consequence" of the group's recent decision to support access to abortion for women who had been raped or whose health was endangered by their pregnancy.

Amnesty body promptly said it did not consider any Vatican or Catholic Church funding anyway.

In a statement, Amnesty International said it had decided in April to involve itself in issues relating to abortion "in the context that they are directly linked to its actions for the right to health and against violence against women."

But it said it will not for or end to the penalization of women who have abortions and the right of women who are victims of sexual violence or incest" or the health of who to have abortions.

But it will "take any worldwide campaign in favor of abortion or to general legalization and "will not make any judgement on whether it is right or not."

Martino meanwhile said: "Thanks be to God, there is an international movement, right to abortion," before actually saying "The pro-abortion pressure groups which continue their propaganda in the framework of what (the late Pope) John Paul II called 'the culture of death.'"

"It is extremely worrying that an organization as worthy as Amnesty International bends to the pressures of these groups," he said.

The Vatican statement expresses astonishment at Martino on the US International Catholic Project.

The site also quotes Whitney Brown, one of the heads of Amnesty International, who pointed out that 600,000 women die each year from backstreet abortions.

Brown said that Amnesty's views on abortion were inspired by its international campaign to combat violence against women. AFP

Shiite holy site bombed again; Iraq braces for the worst

BAGHDAD—SUSPECTED ALQAEDA bombers have toppled the towering minarets of Samarra's revered Shiite shrine, dashing a bold blow to Iraqi hopes for peace and reopening old wounds a year after the insurgent's deadliest horror was destroyed.

The attack on Wednesday rendered both of a range to moderate Sunnis. Moderate Sunnis, Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's government replied to contain Shiite wrath against Sunnis is stamped is true on Baghdad and asked for US troop reinforcements to Samarra, 100 km north of Baghdad, and for a heightened American military alert in the capital.

But there be reports of sectarian strife began to come in. Police told of at least four Sunni Arab mosques in Baghdad and south of the capital attacked by arsonists and bombers, and of a mosque there shrine bombed north of here. On Thursday police said a woman and child were wounded in a mosque bombing on one of the Sunni shrines attacked a day or for.

The Samarra attack also threatened to deepen Iraq's political crisis, as the 20-member bloc of radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr unconditionally suspended its participation in parliament in protest.

The Golden Dome bombing in February 2006, at one of Iraq's most holiest sites, was also blamed on Sunni militants linked to al-Qaeda. That attack unleashed a bloodbath of reprisals—of Shiite death squad murders of Sunnis, and Sunni bombing attacks on Shiites. At least 34,000 civilians died in last year's violence, the United Nations reported.

Wednesday's predawn attack came in near-simultaneous explosions at about 5 a.m., completely bringing down the two slender golden minarets, 30 metres (100 feet tall), that had flanked the shrine's entry. No one was reported killed.

Now the attackers evaded the Askariya shrine's guard force, strengthened considerably after the 2006 bombing, once reports.

Al-Maliki said policemen at the shrine were "martyred" by the explosives. Five of them, according to another US military official. The prime minister also said an unspecified number of other suspects were arrested in Samarra and were being interrogated by Iraqi security forces. AP

The blasts shook Samarra, a city along the Tigris River, sending a cloud of dust billowing into the air, said Imad Sing, a prominent 300 meters from the shrine. "All of the dust settled, I couldn't see the minarets any more. So, I phoned the shop quickly and went home."

Nearby blacksmith shop owner Nazaq al-Samarrai said, "I didn't expect there would be another explosion at Askariya mosque because it was already attacked one time."

Resident Abdul-Hadi Mohammed predicted violence in the capital. "The Shiite militias now will storm the opportunity to kill Sunni civilians in Baghdad."

An hour-long curfew was immediately imposed on Samarra, and, as Iraqi Army and police reinforcements and US troops poured in, the streets emptied by mid-afternoon, witnesses said.

A few hundred US soldiers had been stationed around Samarra but had left shrine security to Iraqi forces. AP

70 million years ago, birdlike giant in China

IMAGE shows a restored to size of fossilized bones of a gigantic clawed dinosaur, Gigantoraptor Erlianensis, are put on display for the media in Beijing, June 13.

SCIENTISTS HAVE UNCOVERED a huge surprise in the Inner Mongolia region of northern China: The land dwellers of an unusually extinct birdlike dinosaur that lived 70 million years ago. The animal appeared to be a young adult 25 feet long and weighing 2,000 pounds and, if it had lived longer, would probably have grown even larger.

Paleontologists and the discovery contradicted widely held theories that carnivorous dinosaurs got smaller as they evolved more birdlike characteristics. But they emphasized that the new specimen did not challenge the theoretical link between dinosaurs and birds.

The Chinese scientists who made the discovery, being reported on Thursday in the journal Nature, said the skeleton belonged to a dinosaur family that included the heaviest, birdlike oviraptors. This family was not closely related to the dromaeosaurid—dinosaurs generally thought to be ancestors of modern birds. NYT

US House passes post-shooting rampage gun bill

WASHINGTON...THE HOUSE, ME. Ed. US House of Representatives on Wednesday responded to the deadliest shooting rampage in modern American history by passing legislation to help keep guns out of hands of the mentally ill.

On a voice vote, the House sent the measure—which would be the first major gun control bill enacted since 1994 and bolster background checks for gun buyers—to the Democratic-led Senate for needed concurrence.

The bill was drafted in consultation with the four million members National Rifle Association, the nation's biggest gun rights group, after a deranged gunman killed himself and 32 others in April at Virginia Tech university.

"I think the chances are very strong that we can get this passed in the Senate," said Democratic Sen. Charles Schumer of New York, president-in-law. Abortion is not laden with amendments that gun rights backers find objectionable.

There was no immediate word from the White House if President George W. Bush, who supports gun rights, would sign the measure into law.

"We are following the legislation closely and are supportive of Congress's efforts to strengthen the background check system," said White House spokesperson Scott Stanzel.

The legislation would provide financial incentives for states to provide mental health and criminal records to a data base used for federal background checks on gun buyers.

The 1968 Gun Control Act prohibits anyone found by a court to be "a mental defective" from possessing a gun. It also bans felons, fugitives, drug addicts and wife beaters.

But because of state privacy laws and fiscal restraints, many states have failed to fully report such records to the National Instant Criminal Background Check System.

A new report issued by administration agencies on Wednesday showed that only 23 states now provide information to the national database regarding mental health records.

Americans are among the world's most heavily armed people, and the country has one of the highest murder rates.

There are an estimated 200 million privately owned guns in the United States, which has a population of about 300 million.

About 30,000 people a year die from gun wounds. Reuters

UNKNOWN DISEASE Wang Chang (right), 15, of Xuehua, and China's Jiangxi province, is suffering from an unknown disease. Doctors, contacted when she was 7, which has caused her legs to continue to grow, with the widest part of her leg currently measuring 51 cm (21.6 inches).

American legal excess: Judge tries suing pants off dry cleaners

WASHINGTON—ROY L. PEARSON JR. wanted to look sharp for his new job as an administrative law judge here. So when his neighborhood dry cleaner misplaced a pair of expensive pants he had planned to wear his first week on the bench, Pearson was prepared.

He summoned his lawyer—for $67.2 million.

The case of the judge's pants, which spread for trial to a packed courtroom here on Tuesday, has been compounded on talk radio and in the blogosphere as an example of American legal excess. And it has spurred complaints to the District of Columbia bar and city officials from consumer reform and civil lawyer groups worried about its effect on public trust in the legal system.

"I don't know of any other cases that have been quite this ridiculous," said Paul Rothstein, a professor of law at Georgetown University.

While recounting the day he says the cleaners tried to pass off a cheaper pair of pants as his, Pearson began to cry, asking for a break and dabbing tissue as he left the courtroom.

The lawsuit dates back to spring 2005. Pearson, 57, a longtime regulated lawyer who enjoys sewing himself, was appointed to a new job as a District of Columbia administrative law judge.

Pearson says in court papers that he entered nearby Custom Dry Cleaners in Northwest to mark the suits to Customs Dry Cleaners, in a strip mall in petty northeast Washington, for alterations.

When the owners, Korean immigrants who came to America in 1992, could not find one pair of pants, Pearson demanded $1,150 for a replacement suit. The owners did not respond. NYT

Pearson argues that under the city's consumer protection law, the owners, Soo and Ju Chung and their son, Ki Chung, each owe $10,000 for each day over a nearly four-year period in which signs at their store promised "Same Day Service" and "Satisfaction Guaranteed." NYT

The WORLD

Lilio Lorenzo B. Dizon

Bush links Syria to bombing in Beirut that killed MP Eido

LEBANESE police inspect the scene of an explosion in Beirut June 13 which killed anti-Syrian legislator Walid Eido (inset). Eido's allies blamed the car bomb attack on Damascus. Eido, his eldest son, two bodyguards and six passersby were killed in the attack near a Beirut beach club. AP, INQ

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WASHINGTON—US PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH ON WEDNESDAY indirectly accused Syria of involvement in the Beirut blast that killed a Lebanese anti-Syrian MP and nine others.

US officials said the attack was aimed at underscoring democracy in Lebanon.

"There has been a clear pattern of assassinations and attempted assassinations in Lebanon since October 2004," Bush said in a statement.

"Those working for a sovereign and democratic Lebanon have always been the targets. The victims have always been those who sought an end to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's interference in Lebanon's internal affairs."

Lebanese MP Walid Eido, 66, his eldest son, Bilaled and eight others were killed on Wednesday in a bomb blast near his Beirut beach club that the ruling majority in parliament blamed on Damascus.

"Let's study carefully today's assassination," Bush said.

He added: "The United States will continue to stand up for Lebanon, its people, and its legitimate government as they face these attacks."

The assault "on Lebanese state institutions by terrorists and armed networks, cross border trafficking, and efforts by the regimes in Damascus and Tehran to foment instability in Lebanon must stop now," he said.

Damascus continues to shield assassin-minded elements in Lebanon, where a pro-Bush and pro-Western-backed government has paralyzed politics for seven months.

Eido, the Sunni chief of parliament's defense committee, was a member of the Future Movement of MP Saad Hariri, whose father, Lebanese Premier Rafiq Hariri, was assassinated in a similar seaborne blast more than two years ago.

Hariri's slaying has been widely blamed on Syria.

Eido is the third member of the parliamentary majority to be killed in a car bombing in the past two years.

In a statement, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice condemned the bombing and described it as "yet another vicious and cowardly act against a courageous member of Lebanon's democratically-elected Parliament."

"The aim of this attack can only be the silencing of yet another Lebanese political leader working for a sovereign and democratic Lebanon," Rice said.

Asked if Washington believed Syria was behind the attack, state department spokesperson Sean McCormack said it was too soon to tell.

"That's the first question that people ask: 'Is Syria behind it? I can't tell you at this point," he told reporters. "But very clearly this is the work of those who intend to want to undermine Lebanese democracy."

Lebanon's ruling coalition accuses Syria of actively trying to block the creation of an international court to try suspects in the killing of Rafiq Hariri, a five-time prime minister of Lebanon murdered in a car bomb attack in February 2005.

Hariri's murder provoked protests and international outrage that forced Syria to end 29 years of military domination in Lebanon.

Damascus has denied any link with the killing of Hariri or the series of other unusual, violent and attempts against anti-Syrian figures in Lebanon. AFP

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PENTAX

Chirac accused of 'treason' over death of judge

FORMER French President Jacques Chirac in photo taken Dec. 2, 2006. AFP

PARIS—FORMER FRENCH President Jacques Chirac was accused of "treason" Wednesday for allegedly helping the government of Djibouti cover up the truth behind the 1995 death of a French judge.

Elisabeth Borrel, who believes her husband Bernard Borrel was murdered by Djibouti agents, said that Premier cooperated with President Ismael Omar Guelleh's efforts to bury the affair because of fears of losing its military base in the tiny east African state.

Her accusation comes a day after documents were made public which appeared to show that in 2000 Chirac advised Guelleh to take France before the International Court of Justice (ICJ in The Hague over the French-initiated investigation into Borrel's death.

Backed by her lawyers, Elisabeth Borrel appealed to Chirac's successor Nicolas Sarkozy to "make a commitment to ensure the respect of the principles which underpin our democracy" over the murder of my husband identified and brought to justice."

"It was Chirac himself who suggested to Djibouti's president to take France before the ICJ," said her lawyer Olivier Morice.

"Juridically what happened comes under the heading of treason, from the start of the affair diplomatic considerations have taken precedence over justice," said Laurent de Caunes, who is also on her legal team.

Borrel's half-burned body was found at the foot of a ravine 80 km from the centre of Djibouti in October 1995. He had been investigating an amendment in the Djibouti justice ministry.

A final enquiry concluded that he had committed suicide, but the new year French justice officials diagnosed the findings and opened a murder investigation.

Elisabeth Borrel and other campaigners believe her husband was killed on orders from senior figures in the Djibouti government because he was in possession of compromising information, possibly concerning arms trafficking or terrorist attacks on French interests in Djibouti.

The government of Djibouti has tried for several years to quash the inquiry in the domestic courts, piled by French investigating magistrates, but their demands have been repeatedly turned down by French justice officials.

In March this year Judges in France's opened a separate investigation into allegations of French political pressure in the Borrel case. AFP

WHAT'S INSIDE
Talk of new dynasty just can't be ignored/A31

SPORTS

Editor Tobbysin S. Melendres Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Delos Reyes

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Harbour sweeps to 3rd PBL title

HARBOUR Centre players and team officials scramble to get after their 3-0 title sweep.

By Jeanine W. Poyo

AGAIN THE CLIMB TOWARD another title was anything but steep for Harbour Centre.

Sweeping Finals opponent Mobile Stampede in the Chooks-to-Go Pilipinas Basketball League Commissioner's Cup Finals.

With Jason Castro, Chico Lanete, Ryan Arana and JC Intal proving unstoppable, Harbour Centre rolled to the Cubbies title, 98-75, to cap its campaign of the best-of-five series at Cubbies Golf Sports Center.

"Our championship experience was a big factor," said Harbour coach Jorge Gallent. "It's been Mobile's first time in the Finals and our poise showed in the end game."

But it was Harbour's pressure defense in the first half that forced the Mountain to play turnover-prone their overwhelming form in the second round.

Sweeping Finals grounded into heavy, Greg Slaughter and Marky Sandoval, the trio who scored for Mobile in a league-best 16.2 points per game, were held to a combined 16.2 points, their lowest output in a conference-best seven straight wins.

It couldn't have been any tougher for the Mountain as the Sabong Pier grounds had their way early.

Just minutes after bagging his second straight Most Valuable Player award, Castro replenished his scoring by scoring 18 points, eight rebounds and three steals.

"It was just all hard work," said Gallent. "Everyone played very well. Even the role players to the max."

Lanete, who also captured a second straight Finals MVP plum, also had 18 rebounds, including a key three-point play for a 72-61 advantage of the Mountain had turned within 74-61 midway in the fourth period.

Also on top of his game was Arana, who dished and dished the Mountain's defense ready in the first half to set the tone for the rest.

Arana, named Finals Player, ignited the early scoring barrage by unloading 14 points in the second period for a 41-24 Harbour spread by halftime.

The young squad earned a spot in league history by becoming the fifth team to sweep a third straw in the elite ESG. Ring Tembay and Welcon.

Sweeping Finals also became the third team to

HARBOUR/A30

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BAP should complain to Samahang Basketbol, says POC

By Jane Nisperos

THE PHILIPPINE OLYMPIC COMMITTEE considers the grievances of the Basketball Association of the Philippines as an internal matter that only the Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas should direct to.

POC spokesperson Joey Romasanta said the BAP should raise its concerns with the SBP leadership and not with the International Basketball Federation (FIBA), of which the SBP is no longer a member.

"They (SBP officials) don't have to go to the (Rio) Tam-awan (Resort)," Romasanta said. "It's purely an internal matter that the BAP has to settle with the leadership of the SBP."

BAP president Go Teng Kok, in a letter to Fiba secretary-general Patrick Baumann two weeks ago, criticized the way the SBP has been handling its operations.

But Baumann told Go that the BAP is no longer recognized by the Fiba and any complaint should be addressed to the SBP, the federation now accredited by the world cage body.

BAP secretary-general Graham Lim clarified that the BAP only wanted to have a more active role in the programs of the new organization.

"If you want an active role in the federation, you should coordinate with the officials of that organization," said Romasanta.

"However, there's a big difference between wanting an active role and running (control)."

Romasanta said Baumann had also asked POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr. to assist the SBP in some of its administrative functions to improve the group's unfriendliness with the Fiba.

Cojuangco defended Lim's claims that the SBP has taken in other programs for grassroots cagers even to the formation of the PBA, which cultivated many heroes for the Nba Asia Championship squad.

Cojuangco said the SBP has been busy forming the men's and women's team for the Southeast Asian Games, apart from laying down the groundwork for officiating and its grassroots development program.

Ginebra, Air21 seek q'final clinchers today

BARANGAY GINEBRA AND REBEL INSpired by inspirational quarterfinal series-opening victories in the Talk 'N Text PBA Philippine Cup, try to sweep their respective foes today at the Cuneta Astrodome in Pasay.

The Gin Kings banked on homecourt as a 111-97 bout of last Miguel Beer on Wednesday that odds are now Ginebra's standard in their favor at 4:15 p.m. collision with the Boosters.

Air21 also has the psychological edge as its 7:30 p.m. date with Talk 'N Text, which got humbled-ed in the second half by the Express when the team ran to score a 121-103 win.

Both coaches came unscripturally hot by the teams that climbed them, but to the way they were dressed out.

The Ginebra-San Miguel match, whichmen) thought would be close, was derailed early as the third period with the Kings rallying a margin of 20-point lead.

But both Ginebra's Jong Uichico and Air21's Bo Perasol refused to admit gaining tremendous edge.

"I know their players," Uichico said of the Boosters, "because I handled that team for such a long time. This (Game 1 win) does not, in any way, indicate how this series will go."

Red Texty will again be the main point of the Ginebra game on both ends of the do-it-all import scored 27 points and had 13 rebounds in the Game 1 win.

"The last time I checked, it was a three-game series," Perasol said. "There's still no reason for us to be overjoyed at this point. Instead, I think it's only soon that can come back, it's Talk 'N Text."

There to cause for concern, however, for Perasol, as Wes Gonzales, who scored 11 of the Express' 38 (3rd-quarter production, missed his left ankle in the fourth period and is listed as doubtful.

"We hope it's something serious," said Perasol, who already has leading local scorer Gary David to set 4G2 four-year Unwind of the elimination round. "I believe he can still play."

Morning R. Cuerbo

LA SALLE'S Trai gauer player Sarah Jane Arevalo (left) hugs teammate Regine Diego who dunk tears of joy after their hard-fought win over Adamson.

La Salle lady tossers grab last V-League semis ticket

LA SALLE REPUBLICS

Adamson ... with a sweep of the last three sets to the three-time champion Lady Archers completed a 25-20, 19-25, 25-22, 20-24, 15-6 victory in three (Quiet) for the fifth and last semifinal berth in the Shakey's V-League at The Arena in San Juan yesterday.

In a virtual repeat of their first round faceoff, the Lady Archers fought back from two sets down behind Michelle Gumabao and Jacqueline Alarca to stay alive but lost a fourth straight time after.

Gumabao came away with 13 kills while Alarca had 12, most of them in the third and fourth sets before La Salle dominated the fifth frame.

La Salle also dropped the first two sets before outlasting Adamson, 25-23, 15-25, 25-17, 25-19, 15-10, to finish the series last May 24.

The Lady Archers were unable to go through a playoff after finishing with a 9-4 mark following a loss in the Queen's Lady Warriors, who shared first place with the Lady Stags on 8-5 mark.

La Salle joins Letran's Lady Knights, Santo Tomas's Lady Tigresses (11-2) and host Arellano in the new round of the event organized by Sports Vision.

The semifinals, a single round robin where the teams will carry over their elimination results, starts on Sunday with La Salle duelling with Letran and UE crashing with Arellano.

Illam nine gains Major League World Series

CASTRO: Milestone

GEMIE SQUAD INTERNATIONAL LITTLE League of Manila (Illam) outclassed Guam, 13-2, to four innings yesterday to earn the right to represent the Philippines in the Minor League (11-12) Olde Bellfair World Series at the Rosario Sports Complex in Pasig City.

An in-field signaled victory over the Guamanians on the day before, the team powered past two wrong-with 11-run outburst to three Stan giving up just three hits while striking out nine batters. An 11-run assault in the second inning, with lightning-a grand slam blown run by batsman Ayo Mendoza, was all the Filipinos needed to whip the Guamanians.

The Illam outfielder will try to impress on their bounty grade four series in the World Series, set Aug. 17 at Port Portland, Oregon.

The host country's Junior (13-14) and Senior (14-16) Leagues also appeared on the way to moving up to the World Series to their divisions.

The Filipino Junior leaguers avenged only six losses to Canada Ontario, Ltd., while the Senior Leaguers clobbered the Guamanians, 8-1.

It was the second straight win for the Senior Leaguers, represented by a team from Laguna, who moved within a win of gaining the 14-16 World Series slots.Aug. 9-11 in Anderson.

The Senior Leaguers moved by a team from Rancho City, tasted to pummel two Canada 13-14 outfielders to reach the World Series slated Aug. 13-16 in Kirkland, Washington.

Castro nails 2nd MVP award over Bono

By Jasmine W. Piya

THE LATEST FORMER EFFECTIVE lyrics on his personal duality.

Barbara Cristo's Jason Castro regained his second straight PBL Most Valuable Player plum yesterday to join the league's elite list of back-to-back winners.

"There's an extra good season and many good players in Harbour so I didn't expect that I'd win another one," Castro said in Filipino.

The dutch shooting guard became the first player in the past decade to bag the honor since Eric Menk won back-to-back MVP titles with Pasalubong in 1997 and 1998.

Castro, though, pulled off the feat with two different teams.

"Sya's sign of support to their points I'm flattered to each didn't find it hard to adjust," said Castro, who bagged his first MVP title with Hapee POZ in the last Fiber Cup.

Castro, who a sensation with Philippine Christian University, finished with 499.277 points after edging teammate of 12.488 points, 6.07 boards, 4.71 assists and 1.35 steals.

The 22-year-old edged first-timer... also received figure in Carlos Dadiles-Dizon. Dadiles's also received the campaign this season on a six light very true tallied the statistical points and the players and media during...

Jones, this conference's scoring leader, earned 6,613.3 points to finish second to Castro with 6,375.6 points and 2,116 rebounds per contest.

The Fantastic Freshman seemed set to span Bono's throne, the rookie PBL title who pulled it looked Yanto and easy in the first round.

Castro, who had been awarded the Mythical Team with Cebuana's Doug Kramer, Harbour's David Jones and Toyota Batangas's Jeremie Tena.

THE Archers pose for posterity after dominating the recent Nike leagues.

Archers shoot down Tams, take Nike title

By Jasmine W. Piya

LA SALLE SUSTAINED ITS DOMINATION streak behind scrappy hero Aaron Mangahas as the Archers downed the for Eastern University Tamaraws, 88-83, over the weekend in taking the Nike Summer League at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

Mangahas, a rookie forward, drained a pair of crucial baskets in overtime in a 12-point effort that served it up for the Tall Artesian-based squad.

Most Valuable Player Ben Mbala-Ndzie fired 23 points and grabbed 17 rebounds to lead the Archers in double-figures.

Marshallers and teammate Tyrone Tang were also instrumental in the Red Pirs along with PBA's Mac Baracael, University of the East's Manny Arellano and Mapua's Neil Nicerio.

Jr. Gest 16, Cart T. Jalgam 6, Glen L. Jimenez 5, Rodolfo E. Ramirez 5, Rebound

LA SALLE 88 – Gumabao 13, Bongcac 11, Villanueva 12, Tang 15, Ildefonso 6, Cu 6, Dawa Allen 3, Mendoza 5, Lee 2

EASTERN – Arevalo 12, Sumang 14, Fernandez 12, Bolivar 13, Rivera 10, Arellano 17, Bartlett, Concepcion 2, Abalos 0, Reyes 0, Edrinjard 0, Ignacio

Quarters: 18-16, 31-28, 50-47, 79-79, 88-83 (OT)

SPORTSWATCH

So chess player of the month

NICOLAS JOSE MANZANO, THE UNIVERSITY of the Philippines (UP) chess champion with the overwhelming triumph last month, was voted as "Player of the Month" by the Chess Journalists Association of the Philippines (CJAP) for May. Sr. at Globe.com. Jose's fourth highest rated player, topped the monthly voting the National Junior Chess Championships in Mandaluyong. he finished with 6 points in eight wins and one draw in the tournament organized by the NCFP headed by Grandmaster Rey Bisguera. "Rank 6" Pelayo was announced by the Sagunday City government under Mayor Shalimar Suarez.

107 Fights in SJC derby finals

THE 107 FIGHTERS WHO WON THE QUALIFYING bouts in the Sagunday City Derby will be divided into eight cards of 13 a-piece today at San Juan Coliseum with the landing set of Saturday's Complete 2008. Charlie Rose of Bicol, veteran of the 2006 World Slasher Cup-winning heads the qualifiers with four points after two days of battle. Other heavyweight winners are Jay Ramos in partnership with Semper Amphibious Corp the Club and Tito with Armen Santos of Laguna Under Heavyweight and Cornelius Rodney Peter of Philippine Marines Club. Bantamweight Bartholomew Sam Mendoza (108 lbs) Scorpio and Sto. Tomas Mendoza from Cavite Marshals.

12th leg of PCAP series Monday

THE 12TH LEG OF POWER CONDITIONS ASSOCIATION of the Philippines (PCAP) 3-cushi derby series begins at the Basketball Coliseum on Monday with 8 Alling Derby. Aces and Deuces Marshall as main sponsors. Two more derbies will be staged before the PCAP Cooker series. Year veteran is finally known. The grand championship caution on July 1. Randy Diaz and Edwin Diaz, with the entry Michael Dee, lead the race with 2,915 points. Jonathan Cruz and Jeff Fernando of Federal Breakers group are second spot with 2,615 points.

300 entries vie in 'Hataw an'

RACES ON COCKS-HAVE INTERNATIONAL ED SAY, the summer "Hataw an Sa Tapukan" 6-cock derby slated on Sept. 1, 2, 7, 8 and 15 at the Philippine Cockpit Arena in Quezon City. Some 300 entries are expected from 60 breeders from across the country. Organizers said Philippine Red Gamefowl Breeders Association Inc. (PRGBAI) will offer an entry fee of P4,000, according to Chairman Eddy Lopez. Cesar Manguiat of Quezon City and Ricky Yulo of Quezon Province will serve as the derby's co-chairmen. Manguiat also chairs the derby's technical committee, while Yulo is the chairman of the derby's executive committee. Also known as "The Battle of Champions," the derby is open to all breeders in the country. Entries will be accepted from Aug. 1 to 31. Derby officials said the derby will be held at the Philippine Cockpit Arena in Quezon City. Some 300 entries are expected from 60 breeders from across the country. Organizers said Philippine Red Gamefowl Breeders Association Inc. (PRGBAI) will offer an entry fee of P4,000, according to Chairman Eddy Lopez. Cesar Manguiat of Quezon City and Ricky Yulo of Quezon Province will serve as the derby's co-chairmen. Manguiat also chairs the derby's technical committee, while Yulo is the chairman of the derby's executive committee. Also known as "The Battle of Champions," the derby is open to all breeders in the country. Entries will be accepted from Aug. 1 to 31. Derby officials said the derby will be held at the Philippine Cockpit Arena in Quezon City.

Harbour . . .

Turn page A20

pull off back to back championship sweeps, having dominated Rapsa, 3-0, in their title series in the last conference.

HARBOUR (45) – Castro 16, Lanete 10, Jones 10, Ildefonso 6, Mendoza 5, Villanueva 5, Bolick 4, Cortez 3, Tagaro 2, Ramos 1, Magsanoc 1, Bonus 1, Bonus 1, Bonus 1

CEBUANA LHUILLIER (39) – Tan 10, Tagaro 12, Ramos 10, Cortez 5, Bolick 2, Bonus 1, Bonus 1, Bonus 1, Bonus 1, Bonus 1, Bonus 1, Bonus 1

Quarters: 13-9, 25-16, 36-26, 45-39

One for Ripley's: Fonacier aces same hole in 2 days

Beats 225 million-to-1 odds

DAKILA FONACIER DARED OUT A SO-SUPS WELSH! dream into weekend. He shot a hole-in-one on the same hole at Tagaytay Midlands last Saturday and Sunday.

The 50-year-old Bataan, a 6-handicapper, first holed out in the Quarterly Members tournament on Saturday using a 9-wood on the 167-yard par-3 17th, right-to-left downhill hole.

"The ball bounced once about 15 feet from the flag, then dropped," said Fonacier, the former MB commissioner and chairman of Odyssey Home & Video Group. "How pure or sound are some events."

In the same hole the next day Fonacier again took the same 9-wood and swung.

"This time, the ball went to the higher and had a stronger right-to-left draw, but it still ended on the same spot and bounced in," he recalled. "It was my same swing exactly."

Fonacier, who plays three rounds a week at his home courses at Midlands and Manila Golf Club, had his last ace ... his second ... 24 years ago.

"There were 24 years between my second and this (ace)," he said. "Who would believe that I only had to aces in 24 years between my third and fourth?"

Golf statistician estimates the odds of a hole-in-one to be as high as 42,952 to 1, although some insurance companies peg the hole-in-one odds at 15,000 to 1 for an average golfer. Pulling off the feat two days in a row certainly sets Fonacier, however, raised the odds to an astounding 225 million-to-1.

Fonacier was ushered into Indonesian hunter Victor Tio, engineer Richard Tan and retired SGV partner Pepsi Flores during his first hole-in-one. His cronies in the second ace were MCM executives Guido Saroli and Michael Dybing, Indian writer Jacky Sunny, Luanco Associates and Detail Vigna and financial consultant Richard Delos.

King James pays homage to San Antonio

JAMES: Awed

CLEVELAND — THE San Antonio Spurs are closing in on their fourth title in nine years with a surge that has impressed even ruthless rivals.

"It's awesome," the Cleveland Cavaliers forward said regarding the eight-team to Miami to earn the finals to a four-game sweep.

Cleveland was handily beaten in the series' first two games in San Antonio but then lost game three, 75-72, on Tuesday night when the Spurs appeared vulnerable.

Cavaliers forward Drew Gooden compared Duncan's plight to a poker player laying down his final chips.

"We're still right now," he said. "We're playing our last hand. One fault has to change or the series is over. This is the ultimate challenge.

"People say it's so impossible and that you have to fold and believe it my be done. I think we'll have a better mind set if we just win one game and take it from there."

Spurs coach Gregg Popovich does not want to hear talk of a dynasty, even though his team is gunning for its third title in the past five years.

"That doesn't even enter my head because it's all about the challenge," he said. "When I think of dynasties, two come to my mind real quick, UCLA and Bill Russell. Everything else is just talk after that."

James is averaging 32 points in the series but has not been able to dominate as he did in the Eastern Conference finals against Detroit.

Cleveland coach Mike Brown credited the Spurs' tight defense but said James was the injured team had both on Tuesday even though the three-time All-Star scored 25 points.

"Even though he does noted's falling he was still scoring it's up to myself with his aggression and he found a way to get in the fix," said Brown.

"In a couple of lay-ups, watching the tape, boy oh boy, I'd almost bet my whole paycheck [those shots] would go in."

Now the Cavaliers have to win three straight to claim their title. Reuters

AS SPURS GO FOR SWEEP

Talk of new dynasty just can't be ignored

LIKE his grip on the ball, Duncan and the Spurs seem to have a lock on their fourth NBA title in nine years.

CLEVELAND, OHIO — WHILE THE SAN ANTONIO Spurs begin to consider their place among **National Basketball Association** dynasties, the Cleveland Cavaliers cling to the hope they can make some history of their own.

The Spurs will try to win their fourth NBA crown in nine years Thursday by completing a sweep of Cleveland in the best-of-seven NBA Finals. Only Boston, Chicago and the Los Angeles Lakers have won more than four league titles.

"The opportunity to do that is an unbelievable thing," Spurs star Tim Duncan said. "To have a team that has the ability to challenge for a championship year in and year out, that's all you can ask.

"We've got to get this one done and of course we're focusing on that."

But the Spurs, who won in 1999, 2003 and 2005 — are punishing their place in NBA history alongside the legendary 1960s Boston Celtics and editions of Lakers and Michael Jordan's six-time champion Chicago Bulls of the 1990s.

"I do believe we have a big opportunity to do something special," guard Manu Ginobili said. "There aren't so many teams who have the chance to win four titles in nine years. We've got to do whatever it takes."

The team to NBA history has won a playoff series after falling behind 3-0, although Cavaliers coach Mike Brown insisted, "There's always a first time for everything."

Seven of 31 finals with 3-0 starts have ended in sweeps, most recently in 2000, when if the Cavaliers paved the sweep in their first trip to the finals. Cleveland's 42-year drought of 13 sport championships continues.

"While should have kicked it a long time ago," Cleveland's Drew Gooden said. "This is the ultimate challenge. We have to find it in the door. We'll have a better mind set if we win our game and take it from there."

Cleveland's 22-year-old superstar LeBron James, shut down by San Antonio's defense, admits the Spurs' greatness.

"It's awesome. They have a dynasty already a week," James said. "The experience factor — we don't like to make any excuses, but it definitely played a part in the finals against a world-passed team in the Eastern.

"They don't have the greatest athletes in the world. They don't have the greatest shooters in the world. But they have probably the greatest team in the world and that's what this sport is all about."

Duncan, a three-time NBA Most Valuable Player, struggled to score himself and his team alongside Bill Russell, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Michael Jordan among the NBA's all-time neighbors.

"There have been these dynasties I don't know that we can consider ourselves a dynasty," Duncan said. "Dynasties are the Lakers of the '80s or the Celtics, teams that have dominated for many years.

"Hopefully we can look back in a couple of years and be considered something like that. But as of now I can't imagine we would be considered doing something daring alongside those guys."

Spurs coach Gregg Popovich, flummoxed by notion, saying only the Celtics' run of 11 NBA titles in 13 years with Russell and UCLA's John Wooden's 10 titles in 12 are worthy.

"It doesn't even enter my head. I think that's all pundits babble," Popovich said. "When I think of dynasties two come into the head, UCLA and Bill Russell. Everything else is just talk after that."

Popovich is one of the brain of the talk about the Spurs, noted French guard Tony Parker, the NBA Finals' top scorer.

"It's just consistency. Every day in practice coach Pop — everybody knows he's tough — always, looking for perfection. I think that's the only way you can keep winning. We play the same way and we believe in our system," he said.

"We've got a great organization. It's like a little family. This is how you build championship runs. Over the years it pays off."

Duncan, the Spurs' family, whose last loss to the Spurs in the semi-finals, played on three title teams with the Lakers but says the Spurs are greater. AP

Tiger agrees: Oakmont toughest US Open test yet

TIGER: Putting is key

OAKMONT, PENNSYLVANIA — Twice champion Tiger Woods, hunting a third major victory to four years, will have to cope with the toughest greens he has ever seen at this week's US Open.

Although Woods usually dominates the murphies going into the big events, he has played second fiddle to Oakmont Country Club's undulating 7,477-yard layout in the build-up to Thursday's opening round.

Oakmont's 447 par/ 12th hole will become the longest par five in Open history and the 18th-par eighth will take over as the longest par three.

The tight, hilly course has few the feel to renowned for its slick, undulating greens which have been described by the players as scary fast.

"They are by far the most difficult greens I've ever played," world number one Woods told reporters.

"We've got Brad's many pretty rough and Augusta's are pretty rough," he added, referring to last year's US Open venue and to reigning Masters and Open champion Phil Mickelson.

"The rest don't even golf courses have fast spots. Augusta may have those big, big slopes but they also have the shelves where they usually put the pins on. I feel, I'm trying to figure out where s/he shall's.

"To the course, it depends on how the pins are set. If they go crazy, they can make it impossible. But if they put pins in generous spots, I think it will be just a matter of, 'Am I going to hit it close enough to me.' The players did, however, receive a helping hand from Mother Nature on Wednesday when just under half an inch of rain fell, softening greens and fairways that had firmed up under scorching sunshine.

Australia's Geoff Ogilvy, the defending champion, also pinpointed Oakmont's greens as a major obstacle.

"The greens here are the obvious challenge to me," the 30-year-old said. "Everything else and there is maybe two other US Opens.

"It has narrowish fairways, pretty good rough and bunkers but the greens here are something different. They are amazing and they are a lot faster than maybe they should be even."

Asked to predict this week's winning score, Ireland's Padraig Harrington replied: "I would take four 70s.

"I wouldn't be putting my house that right now par is going to win this tournament, but I certainly think it's got a chance."

As soon as a US Open, the ability to grind out pars and stay patient when the going gets tough will be crucial. Reuters

Foreign bidders strike hard in PBC Int'l Open

NORMAN SELLERS CONTINUED TO spurned the late comeback of the Old Mall of Asia Bowling Center late Wednesday to outdog in an upheaval in the Open division of the Philippine Bowling Congress International Tenpin Bowling Championships.

Showing the way was South Korean kim Hee-jung, who soared to the top of the ladies' Open singles ranked with a four-game series of 902 on lines of 189, 269, 246 and 248 respectively.

Kim was up by 27 pins over Malaysia's Sarl Iman, the new runner-up, who bowled 856 in the tourney sponsored by Strykes, Arenas, Philippines Sports Commission and the Department of Tourism.

The 50th PBC Division Open men's and ladies' Open masters finals will be televised live from 2 to 6 p.m. tomorrow (Solar Sky Cable Studio 22.)

Slipping to third place was national pool bowler Apple Pericho (894) in the ladies' Open. Pericho, the third, the official earlier of the 50 meet.

Indonesia's Ryan Calisang also made his big name in the men's singles, scoring a four-game series of 1,008 on lines of 276, 242, 256 and 244, falling just 8 pins short of livestreaming. Julian Ely who grimly held on to the top after a much with his 1,046.

Stepping into third was Hong Kong's Wu Siu-kong, who came up with a 969 after rolling games of 247, 256, 258 and 208.

Also shining in the spotlight was the Korean trio of Hong Jung-yeon, Kang Jin-sun and Jeon Ji-Young in after they scintillated for 1,249 pinfalls in tabling top spot in the men's Open team event.

Dipping to second place was the team of JSP pool players Tyrone Dogmanen, Isidro Dalden and Ep (?) Ocal while the strikes of Nilroy Briones, Medlevic Rio and youth masters champion Jeff Chan rose at 1,212.

Moving into third place to ladies Open doubles was the Malaysian-Korean lanes of Liad Imran and Kim Eun Ang, who put together a score of 926, 1 pins behind second runners-up Glenda Ely and Rizza Briones (926) and 42 off the first placed duo of Lita del Rosario and Heidi Josef (968).

Iloilo scores stunner over Tagaytay

ILOILO CITY — THE LOWLY ILOILO Warriors pulled off a huge reversal in the 2007 Spring Cooking Oil-MBC Basketball Invitational tournament on Wednesday by downing front-running Tagaytay Spring, 85-83, at the Quezon Convention Center here.

Paul Bulgos starred for the Warriors with 21 points as the Ilonggos dealt the Cooking Oil Masters only their second loss in eight games.

Despite the setback, Tagaytay remained on top of the tourney supported by Atlantic Lines, Spring Cooking Oil, Yahoo Phils., San Miguel Beer, Cobra, Sun Cellular, Firefly Lightings, Rain-flos Shipping Lines, Mellers, Nature's Spring, Basketball TV and Viva Prime Chemical.

Defending champion Quezon Cuna beat Quezon Hills duties, 85-70, in the other contest. Bruce Bustu scored six of his 21 points in the fourth to power Quezon to their sixth win in nine outings.

BET TOP CHOICE

Nadal sharp on grass; Hewitt exits

LONDON—RAFAEL NADAL MADE A RUCcessful transition to grass Wednesday, beating Juan Martin del Potro of Argentina, 6-4, 4-6, in the second round at Queen's Club.

Defending champion Lleyton Hewitt was upset by French qualifier Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, 7-6 (5), 7-6 (2), after he conceded his second service game after Odhan advanced, 7-6 (7), 4-6, 7-6 (5).

Fourth-seeded Novak Djokovic beat Robert Kendrick of the United States, 6-0, 6-3, 6-2.

Nadal, the French Open champion, broke Del Potro in the ninth game of the first set, and then again to open the second.

"It's a big change from clay to grass, but I feel good," the top-seeded Nadal said. "The final last year to Wimbledon gave me a lot of confidence, and I'm feeling really well."

Nadal, who has won three straight French Open titles, lost to top-ranked Roger Federer at Wimbledon last year.

"[Del Potro] started serving very well but he stopped a little bit and I could start to return more," Nadal said. "But I can't make excuses because every server I was serving the games ... and that's important—especially on grass."

Nadal said he felt relaxed at the Wimbledon warm-up.

"I am coming here with no result pressure ... it's to play good tennis, try to adapt as fast as possible to grass," Nadal said.

Fourth-seeded Djokovic, who also went three straight years from 2006-08, was unable to break former Tsonga's big serve. AP

BOOMERANG! (right) congratulates Hideki Matsui, who hit a three-run homer in the fourth inning.

A-Rod keys Yankees' 8th straight victory

NEW YORK — ALEX RODRIGUEZ HOMERED FROM THE LEFT SIDE OF HIS SWITCH-HITTING STANCE AND HAD A CAREER-HIGH SIX RBIS AS THE NEW YORK YANKEES EXTENDED THEIR WINNING STREAK TO EIGHT GAMES WITH AN 11-5 VICTORY OVER THE ATLANTA BRAVES ON TUESDAY.

Rodriguez connected off Tim Hudson (3-5) in the fourth inning and added a two-run single in the seventh off Jeff Bennett. Rodriguez also had a run-scoring double off Hudson in the first inning.

Hudson allowed seven runs and 10 hits in 5 1/3 innings. Bennett (1-0) pitched the last 1 2/3 innings for the win.

Reuters

SPORTS

RP OPEN BADMINTON

Hidayat heads stellar field

HEADSET to serve during the 2005 PBF Cup.

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Young lady booters face Singaporeans in initial test

By Marc Anthony Reyes

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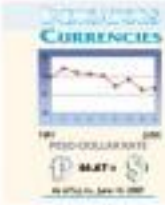

Stocks shoot through the roof

Market heaves sigh of relief over Wall Street news

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

THE STOCK MARKET AGAIN HIT ITS HIGHEST LEVEL in 80 years, boosted by Wall Street's overnight jump as investors there cheered lower bond yields.

"This is just a knee jerk reaction, [illegible] rides like a rapid ride in Wall Street's overnight jump" said Francisco Libres, PCCI Securities president. "It also helps that overall outlook remains positive over the long term."

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index surged 84.8 points or 2.29 percent to 3,620.63, making the 30th bond that the index could hit the 3,700 level.

During the day's trading, the market also posted a new high of 3,633.45.

The index's previous high was 3,624.81

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■ **Local airlines move to keep standards high, fares low** /B4
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Benpres to resolve debt issue by yearend

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

BENPRES HOLDINGS CORP, THE HOLDing company of the Lopez family, is optimistic that it will be able to fully restructure this year its debts roughly amounting to $400 million or P18 billion, Benpres president Angel Ong said in a shareholder's meeting yesterday.

Ong said Benpres would propose to its bank creditors that it would settle its debts by paying cash issued from the sale of assets, and rescheduling the repayment period of the loans to 12 years from 10 years.

In June 2002, Benpres was able to bring down its debt from P26 billion at $500 million.

"It is now imperative for us to resolve this three years' debt issue," Benpres chair Oscar Lopez told shareholders. "We cannot properly set our vision and strategy for the future with that debt hanging like a Sword of Damocles over our heads. We must set a clear vision of what we want to be in the longer term and how we intend to get there."

"And we must communicate all of these clearly, cohesively and convincingly, in a way that enables us to be valued favorably by the market. But to do all of these, we have to rid ourselves of the shackles and uncertainty currently represented by that debt."

Ong said among Benpres' assets for sale are its stake in the Manila South Tollways Corp., through First Philippine Infrastructure Development Corp. (FPIDC), Rockwell Land Corp., Digital Telecommunications Phils. and Sky Cable.

Rockwell has plans for a massive debut as the stock market is loud its projects.

Benpres is not involved in Rockwell's initial public offering plan, although its 20.5 percent stake in Rockwell has long been identified for divestment.

Benpres has decided to junk an earlier option to retire some of its debts by swapping its shares in FPIDC and Digital.

North Harbor, Transco in MPIC's scope

METRO PACIFIC INVESTMENTS CORP, THE Philippine holding firm of Hong Kong conglomerate First Pacific Co., plans to hasten its growth by funding new projects in power and stakes in a major port and the national power grid, MPIC chair Manuel Pangilinan said.

To help boost this plan and raise future capital, the company has secured approval from shareholders to raise its authorized capital to P10 billion from P4 billion.

Pangilinan said MPIC is keen watching developments in the privatization of the Manila North Harbor.

"Having been involved in Ninoy Aquino International [Airport], it's a lot of work," Pangilinan said, referring to the acquisition and operation of the port. "We haven't seen the numbers, but it's a preliminary interest [he say]. We don't have the experience and it's probably ideal for us to partner with someone. We need a partner with operating experience. Probably a local partner."

MANGALIMAN

There are only two major port operators in the country—International Container Terminal Services Inc. and Asian Terminals Inc.

Pangilinan also confirmed Metro Pacific's interest in bidding for the 25-year concession of the National Transmission Corp.

When asked whether MPIC is also interested in acquiring the government's 26-percent stake in San Miguel Corp. and 30-percent stake in Manila Electric Co., Pangilinan said that the company would probably opt to study Meralco.

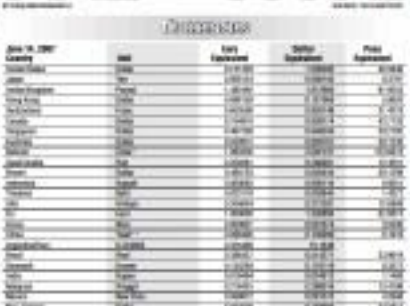
He said San Miguel is "more complicated" since it is weighed down by sequestration issues.

"It doesn't cost us to look," Pangilinan said of Meralco.

Aside from power and port operations, MPIC had said it was keen on expanding its portfolio of hospital investments.

Pangilinan said it may acquire one hospital this year to replicate the success of Makati Medical Center, where MPIC owns 35 percent.

"The successful experience of Makati Medical can be replicated in other hospitals, not only in Metro Manila but in other major provincial cities, and we will continue to look at infrastructure projects, expanding Manila's operations and [renewing] in power," Pangilinan said, citing the firm's interest in Manpower/Water business Inc., which holds the water franchise for the western part of Metro Manila. (Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson)



Policies at the root of NFA problems

By Amy R. Remo

RISING POLICIES, and not the National Food Authority's inefficiency, are the cause of the cash-strapped agency's problems which have resulted in accumulating losses over the past years, according to Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap.

According to Yap, he has been telling economic managers that "the most important solution you can do to NFA is to revisit its (rice) price policy."

The NFA has been mandated to ensure food security in times and places of calamity or emergency, as well as stabilize the supply and prices of grains, both at the farm-gate and consumer levels.

Yap cited an Australian study, which pointed out that NFA's losses are basically due to policy considerations rather than operational.

"They're saying that NFA is such a sweet heart, but if you look at the organism of NFA, only 20 percent are their operations and 80 percent are (a) social (b) wrong policies," Yap said.

Although he did not mention his specific policies in question, Yap said the department would seek to correct the erring policies through various talks the agriculture agency has lined with Congress.

"We're meeting for Congress to pass the bill that will reform the NFA because there is a need to rationalize it," Yap said. In NFA's trading rationalization a buffer stock component."

He added that the rationalization of functions is important to identify which specific role the NFA should take.

The measure, he said, is the provision of the floating losses or calamity the job of the NFA or the National Disaster Coordinating Council?

He also asked if it is the job of the NFA or the Department of Trade and Industry to deliver rice to various markets so as to stabilize supply.

Yap added that the department should also study the policy considerations of subsidizing rice, especially their impact on the country's cost infrastructure.

Yap earlier said the NFA is waiting for proposals from the banking sector for the subrescuing of its rice worth P43.1 billion.

The loans were originally structured and financed in 2003 using rice coupon bonds and are currently used as collateral for NFA's debts.

Yap said that they are expecting to generate about P20 billion from the sale of the bonds, the proceeds of which would be partly used to retire the P43.1-billion loan. The rest would be invested in warehouses and drying facilities, cash as donor for corn.

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BOI, CITEM and BETP government officials visits PLDT INNOLAB

PLDT Innolab, the Innovation Laboratory and Telecommunications Education Center of PLDT was recently visited by the officers of the Board of Investments (BOI), the lead government agency responsible for the promotion of investment in the Phils.; Bureau of Export Trade Promotion (BETP), an agency that delivers timely and relevant information and assistance to exporters and would-be exporters and Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions (CITEM), the export promotion agency of DTI.

PLDT Innolab is a showroom and test laboratory of PLDT's wide range of products and solutions that would cater to the needs of the Business Sector, Government and the Academe. The tour showcases how technology can help develop the country as a world-class ICT provider and help the country be in the forefront of progress. BOI, BETP and CITEM will be bringing prospective investors to PLDT Innolab to assure these investors of a reliable telecommunications network infrastructure.

Shown in photo from L-R are: James Yap, BOI Budget Desk OIC-Chief; Caly Cruz, BOI Asia Desk Chief; Joanalie Comillo, BOI Business Development Manager of ICT Services; Domingo Bagaporo, BOI Director of Exc. & ICT Dept.; Socio Mendoza, BETP Sr. Trade and Industry Dev't Specialist and Rowena Mendoza, CITEM OIC of Operations Division.

Second row from L-R: Joey Limjap, PLDT AVP and Head of Corp. Solutions Development; Flo Dorlinyaso, BOI Japan Desk OIC-Chief; Marlou Medinan, CITEM Deputy Executive Director and Ignacio Sevilla, PLDT Innolab Administrator.

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NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office applications for Alien Employment Permits.

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
EDUTECHNOLOGY INTERNATIONAL, INC. 1000 E. Rodriguez Village, Makati City	Chang Mun Hong	Marketing Executive
TILE MACHINE PHILS., INC. Warehouse 888, Don Mariano Ln. Industrial Complex, Bellang Kapitn Rd., Mariano Ave. Las Pinas City	Takanori Miyazaki	Deputy General Manager
E-WORLD TRAVEL & TOURS INTL. CORP. Unit 1103 Prestige Star Tower, Ayala Blvd., Manila	Tsenglin Jang	Operations Manager
PIL-ASIAN STRATEGIC RESOURCES & PROPERTIES CORPORATION Unit 2701, 27/F The Peak Tower, 107 E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City	Robert Gordon Business Company	General Supervisor of the Board
HMC ELECTRONIC DATA PROCESSING (PHILIPPINES) INC. #120 Real Arcade Building, Rodriguez Subdivision, Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Michael Villanueva	Vice President (Learning and Development)
SHOTOKU (PHILIPPINES) CO. 2/F Tower One Bldg., Filinvest City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Shotoku Company Corp.	Finance and Planning Manager
L.G.T. INT'L. SALES, INC. #701 - 7 Ayala Tri, Salcedo Village, Makati	Chua Ji	Cook
NBK PHILIPPINES (GAMING) CENTER INC. Asia Coliseum, Rodriguez Subdivision, Filinvest 2 Complex City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Sinyoung Cho	Maintenance
KABLA-T INT'L. TRADING CORP. #88 Lontok St., San Juan, Manila	Sian Ho	Purchasing Manager
SOO SUNGGOOD ETRADING CORPORATION #5A Rockwell, San Juan, Manila	Mikio Tang	Product Manager
TRANSNATIONAL TECHNICAL IMPORT & EXPORT CORPORATION Unit 1, 9/F Wilcon Tower, 712 J.G. Cacho Ave., Cor. Aguja Str., Malate, City, San Antonio, Pasay City	Yu Shao	Deputy Chief Representative
UNILEVER PHILIPPINES, INC. Unit A & B, Ayala, Manila	Leander Dale Grace	Managing Director, Condimentations
UNITOP GENERAL MERCHANDISE INC. #88 Sto. Rosario St., Wawang Lupa, Valenzuela City	Yehia Ali	Manager
UNITOP GENERAL MERCHANDISE INC. #88 Sto. Rosario St., Wawang Lupa, Valenzuela City	Magid Ali	General Manager
KUMAR TUTORIAL TRAINING CORPORATION #1 Granite St., Mid Bicutan, Tanguisan St., Bicutan City	Mukender Singh	Finance Manager
VOSETEC, INC. #1 Pacific Star Bldg., Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Hanif Jangani Mazumdar	Vice President Business Development
IBM EXECUTIVE PROCESS SERVICES PHILIPPINES INCORPORATED #8F IBM Plaza Tower, #105 Eastwood Ave., Quezon City	Will Gupta	Chief Financial Officer
CLARITY EDGE PHILIPPINES, INC. 12/F Wynsum Corporate Tower, Gamboa cor. Ortigas, Pasig City	Clive Geoffrey Lawson	VP Operations
ENG'RG TRAINING ONLINE INTERNATIONAL CENTER CORPORATION #1 Pacific Plaza Food Drive, Pasig City	Jin Gee Kim	Operations Manager
ENG'RG TRAINING ONLINE INTERNATIONAL CENTER CORPORATION #1 Pacific Plaza Food Drive, Pasig City	Kim Young Kee	Admin. Manager
ZTE PHILIPPINES INC. #27 Pacific Star Bldg., Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Congfeng Dai	Project Manager
ZTE PHILIPPINES INC. #27 Pacific Star Bldg., Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Yu Du	Technical Manager

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s, please communicate with the Regional Director.

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(Sgd.) LOURDES B. TAMAYO
Regional Director

Local airlines move to keep standards high, fares low

Training new pilots, ensuring better work environment

By Dixie L. Lucot

THE PILOT CORPS OF CEBU PACIFIC AIR has sanctioned quasi-valuable resignations that decimated the ranks of the local airliner's by poaching them to raise triple their salaries.

And unlike Philippine Airlines, which has its own flying school and the financial muscle to attract pilots from smaller operators, the Lopez group's Cebu-based airline manages as a low-cost carrier did not afford it the same luxury.

What it did to solve the problem of pilot supply was nothing short of novel.

Invest in training

"We decided that we needed to invest in training new pilots from scratch," said Cebu Pacific vice president for flight operations Capt. Victor Custodio. "We needed a program that could supply us with pilots fast, without sacrificing quality."

This called for an investment in a flight simulator that could help students with allowance for flying experience (ours is operate the Airbus A320—all while keeping the airline's entire fleet in service.

The airline paid $11 million for the computer-aided flight simulator—a stand-up of an aircraft cockpit—and teamed up with operations piece of Clark Aviation Technologies for rotating programs that could create newly minted A320 co-pilots in only a year.

"What we have is a program that can distinguish the things that we don't need from our pilot training," Custodio said.

"Before, it took a pilot almost five years to accumulate 1,500 [flying] hours. With our training center here [groups] he can accumulate this inside [the simulator]," he said, adding that the experience inside the flight simulator is 99 percent faithful to actual flying experience—and a lot safer.

Coupled with an improved benefits program for its crew, the investment in flight simulator training allows Cebu Pacific to have a steady stream of pilots for its fleet, regardless of the high primary rates by foreign airlines.

It also allows the airline to offer cheaper airfares to the flying public.

Without the training program, Cebu Pacific would have to poach pilots from other airlines at inflated wages—which would eventually be passed on to the consumers.

Cebu Pacific's track is by no means unique.

Philippine Airlines has also adopted the same tack, but through the traditional way.

"We are aware of the growing demand for pilots as we announced our training plan," PAL president Jaime J. Bautista said, adding that the company's emphasis had been on increasing the number of cadet pilots at its school.

Exodus of pilots subsiding

"We are now training 40 to 50 pilots a year to make up for the 60 that we have recently lost," he said. PAL also doubled its fleet of aircraft for basic training to accommodate the additional trainees.

PAL had complained about the high turnover rate of its pilots. This forced the airline to raise by 50 percent its salary levels—which used to be at $4,000 to $7,000 per month—last year.

The Lopez airlines could easily get pilots with packages that start at $10,000 a month.

ASKLAPRING pilot checks out Cebu Pacific's flight simulator as his instructor looks on.

For both carriers, the solution seems to have worked.

In an interview, Bautista said the exodus of pilots had subsided to a "manageable level."

He said PAL was expecting to hire only 10 pilots this year, all to retirement, compared to 32 pilots in 2006, 28 in 2005, and 31 in early 2006—a big draw on its headcount of 450 pilots.

There are only about 700 registered pilots in the country.

Better work environment

Cebu Pacific's Custodio said a similar increase in his airline's non-wage benefits had succeeded in reducing the attrition rate among its 186 strong pilot corps.

Custodio agrees that the airline's investment in a flight simulator—the only one of its kind in the country—makes a significant salary but the budget carriers.

He said, however, that the approach was necessary for the company to maintain a level of safety and to offer cheap airfare in an increasingly cutthroat industry.

Beauty products maker focuses on Bicol

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

THE BODY SHOP IS NOT ALL about making its customers look, feel and smell good.

Around the world, it has developed its business around five core values: Against animal testing, support community trade, activate self esteem, defend human rights and protect the planet.

Rebuilding schools

Its operation in the Philippines is no different, and this came to bear in the last year when it launched its "Help Rebuild Bicol" campaign in the aftermath of super typhoon Reming.

The campaign calls for the repair of school rooms badly damaged or destroyed by one of the strongest typhoons to hit Albay.

By doing so, it hopes to help bring normalcy to the lives of calamity survivors, particularly the children, ensure continuity in the children's education and put them on a path to a good future, and inspire others from to contribute to the rehabilitation efforts.

The Body Shop corporate values group officer Karen Davila says the company had always been involved in children's education, especially in the Philippines where it has a long-running scholarship program.

ONE OF the schoolbuildings to be rebuilt by The Body Shop.

CORPORATE CITIZEN

It turned its attention to Bicol because the gravity of the situation in the province had compelled it to do so.

It was realized that the private sector had to step in because the government had no funds left dealing with relief operations and infrastructure repairs.

"Amid reports that 90 percent of the schools in the area were severely damaged, it seemed but natural for the company to offer repair and rebuilding assistance," but left the beyond.

Children's education

She adds that the school building program fulfills TBS values of enhancing self-esteem and defending human rights.

"Activities self-esteem is after all about empowerment. The value advocates the promotion of self-awareness, self-confidence, self-worth and self-acceptance. It encourages personal development and freedom so people can be anything they want to be," Benita says.

"Defend human rights, more subtle, is about actively supporting those who have human rights denied to them. This includes the children's right to an education," she adds.

TBS screened the Department of Education as early as December 2006, adhering to help repair the school houses.

It even submitted detailed work plans and appointed a contractor to do the work at the selected school.

TBS had proposed to rebuild 16 school rooms of the Camalig North Central School which were severely damaged by typhoon.

Funds permitting, it plans to rebuild two more totally damaged school rooms.

Setting an example

"Through this initiative, TBS Philippines hopes to awaken the private sector in the realities in Bicol. There is still a lot that needs to be done and we, believe. And, each one can certainly help make a difference," she says.

Benita says construction began last April 29 and the company hopes to complete it by July.

"Overall, we hope the restaurant patronage of our customers, along with the support of our husbands, employees and counterparts abroad, and the different contributions of various members of the community to thank for the Bicol schoolroom project and for all our other multi-risk projects. After all, it is through everyone's concerted efforts that we are able to continue to operate and make a difference," she says.

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NISSAN

Merchandise export growth slows to 5%

Despite lower April rate, Neda keeps full-year target of 11%

By Michelle V. Bunoz

THE GROWTH MARGIN TO POST growth in exports in April hit at a lower rate of 5 percent, with total shipments hitting $4.13 billion from year-ago's $3.9 billion.

The decline in the growth rate from 7.3 percent in March could be attributed to the easing of global demand for electronics, the National Statistics Office said.

Electronics exports, the country's top dollar earner, fell $2.165 billion in April, up by only 1.1 percent from the $2.143 billion recorded a year ago. This paled in comparison to the 6.7 percent growth for electronics exports in March.

For the first four months of the year, total exports rose 6.1 percent to $16.30 billion from year-ago's $15.09 billion, way off the full-year growth target of 11 percent.

Analysts said the lower than expected growth in exports was due to the slowdown in the US economy, the country's biggest export destination.

According to the NSO, the United States accounted for 17.4 percent, or $634.50 million, of the Philippines' export earnings for April.

Jonathan Ravelas, market strategist at Banco de Oro, said that while the Philippines had already diversified its export markets, the United States remained its biggest market. This means a slowdown in the US economy still has a considerable impact on Philippine exports.

Also, Ravelas said consumers were probably opting to delay their purchases of electronic goods.

"People could have been delaying their purchases to wait for the next best thing in consumer electronics," he said.

The analysts also said the appreciation of the peso had an adverse impact on demand for electronics.

Importers could the peso strengthening had made Philippine-made products more expensive in dollar terms and, therefore, less competitive.

The peso broke into the 47-to-a-dollar territory in April and further to the 46-to-$1 mark in May due to strong dollar inflows. Despite the lower than expected performance and projections of a $5 showdown, however, the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) said it was keeping the official export growth target of 11 percent for this year.

The Neda said the likely rise in demand for electronics from other export markets would make the 11-percent growth goal achievable.

The country's other major exports in April were: apparel and clothing accessories ($563.16 million); furniture and services of collection of related scopes ($501.89 million); petroleum products ($491.26 million); wood craft and furniture ($465.91 million); wiring sets ($390.90 million); electric oil ($865.65 million); bananas ($327.18 million), and metal components ($94.67 million).

The other major destinations of Philippine goods in April were: Japan ($679.62 million), Netherlands ($531.82 million), Hong Kong ($507.51 million), China ($417.11 million), Singapore ($222.12 million), Taiwan ($184.26 million), Malaysia ($180.99 million), Germany ($147.43 million), and Korea ($134 million).

Power rates should reflect production cost, says Napocor

By Abigail L. Ho

ENERGY SECRETARY RAPHAEL PEREZ Lotilla is urging the Energy Regulatory Commission to come out with a tariff scheme for power generation, transmission and distribution companies that will reflect the true cost of producing and delivering power.

"What we have in mind is a mechanism that will balance, protect and address the interests and welfare of the players in the industry, especially the consumers. The ERC should take the lead in coming out with the pricing scheme," Napocor said in a statement.

It said a number of issues in the current pricing scheme had to be addressed, chief of which was the "unpredictable leap" in the recovery of costs related to fuel procurement and foreign exchange.

The deferred accounting adjustments such as the generation rate adjustment mechanism (GRAM) and the incremental currency exchange rate adjustments (Incra) affect the present pricing scheme, it added.

These pricing issues should be addressed by the contemplated implementation of RA 9136, or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (Epira), as well as through the proposed amendments to this law.

Napocor said the various reforms being implemented under the Epira were geared toward the establishment of a competitive Philippine Electricity Supply Industry (Pesi). An appropriate pricing structure should go with this.

"Having a competitive market-driven pricing mechanism and a strong regulatory body to oversee the processes involved in price determination will redound to the consumers, businesses and industries. The time is now.

For its part, Napocor said it would also constantly improve its generation efficiency and level of adequate power in its customers.

High-end outsourcing next growth area in RP

IBM PHILIPPINES IS EXPECTING a sustained growth in its workforce to meet companies such service providers for business processes that do things better and cheaper.

IBM Global Services (IBM Corp.'s global manager for managed business process services, said in a briefing that the value that technology had been providing were going over toward processes rather isolated tasks.

"There is also the globalization of talent land of jobs] as well as the outsourcing deliver for companies to be distinguished in the market," said Clement, who is based in the United States.

"Those factors are going to be the trend for the long-term and that's why we're seeing the [service providers] that transform their business rather than just helping them reduce costs," he added.

He was referring to business transformation outsourcing or BTO, as opposed to business process outsourcing or BPO, in which IBM has made innovations to become the preferred provider.

BTO means an outside provider can help transform a business function for a client, to cover such functions that require intermediate and final practices.

IBM describes BTO as providing end-to-end services, following through on the processes and not just a one-shot delivery function.

Randy Walker, IBM general manager in the Asia Pacific, said the Philippines was one of three core locations for the firm's BTO services—along with China and India. IBM's local workforce has grown to 1,000 or some 14 percent of IBM's global workforce.

"This is due to the skills that are available here as well as [our clients'] statement about the quality of service in the Philippines," Walker said. "IBM Philippines serves 12 clients or more than a third of the global portfolio."

Walker explained that the company's biggest jobs were in customer relationship management and business resources, but that it expects finance and administration jobs to grow faster in the coming years.

IBM is also offering BTO services in procurement, indirect material and procurement; banking back office; internet claims processing; integrated service management; and mail room charging.

According to Peter Lynn, IBM vice president, the firm's Philippine workforce grew 1,000 percent in 2006 and 60 percent so far this year.

Lynn said IBM was working with local universities like the Ateneo de Manila University to help produce graduates with skills that industries needed.

He said the Philippines had vast opportunities in BTO considering that 100,000 graduates already have skills in finance and administration, 3,000 of which are certified public accountants.

Increased budget for DA cheered

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

LAST JUNE 12 FELT LIKE A SPECIAL Independence Day for the small farmers and fisherfolk because on an unscheduled area made that promised the start of their independence from poverty.

After what they perceived as nine years of neglect, many applauded Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap's bold announcement that he would propose a P127-billion 2008 budget for the Department of Agriculture (DA).

When two rapid liberalization moves placed the country's tariff reductions were even more severe than what the World Trade Organization (WTO) required, the farmers and fisherfolk staged several rallies.

They were placated by the promise of safety nets and a well-staffed agriculture law spearheaded by Sen. Edgardo Angara.

This was the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act of 1997.

Since then, things have gotten worse instead of better.

Instead of being a net exporter of agricultural products, we are now a net importer.

And the promised significant increase in agricultural jobs never materialized.

The farmers and fisherfolk felt betrayed. The promises of safety nets proved empty. Africa was never properly implemented. And only last year, the P66.4-billion supplemental budget did not include even one peso for agriculture.

Africa budget

Given the understanding that Africa should jumpstart our agricultural growth, an additional budget of P28 billion for the first year (FY08) was identified.

This included specific amounts for key areas such as irrigation, post-harvest facilities, marketing, credit and research and development.

For the succeeding six years, Section 111 of Africa states: "The Department of Budget and Management is hereby mandated to include annually for the next six years an amount not less than P27 billion for implementation of this act."

Yesterday, at the Alyansa Agrikultura meeting, with its 42-member federations and organizations representing all major agriculture sectors, a further leader formulated and presented the table below.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE BUDGET

YEAR	AFMA	ACTUAL	DIFFERENCE
1999	P97.2 B	P97.2 B	0
1998	P86.2 B	P74.7 B	P10.5 B
1997	P82.1 B	P76.2 B	P7.2 B
1996	P82.1 B	P68.8 B	P13.3 B
1995	P82.1 B	P78.1 B	P4.0 B
1994	P82.1 B	P56.8 B	P25.3 B
1993	P82.1 B	P49.8 B	P32.3 B
1992	P82.1 B	P48.1 B	P34.0 B
1991	P82.1 B	P43.8 B	P38.3 B
1990	P82.1 B	P53.8 B	P28.3 B
1989	P82.1 B	P53.8 B	P28.3 B
1988	P82.1 B	P53.8 B	P28.3 B
1987	P82.1 B	P53.8 B	P28.3 B
ACCUMULATED DIFFERENCE			**P327.3 B**

From this table, we note that the (34 proposed) budget (announced last June 12) is exactly what the DA should have gotten for the last nine years.

The actual amounts given to DA, however, are far below this amount. This is why the farmers and fisherfolk feel betrayed.

Commentary

Those who argue that the current Yap's P32.7-billion proposal is too much should look at the sad state of our agriculture and the Africa law.

Even if the P32.7 billion request for 2008, there is still the unreconciled difference of P16.1 billion that the DA never got over the last nine years.

All of us could do the best we can in the years to use through areas but through development. The 2008 budget for this year is P54.6 billion, almost three times the little budgets of P19.5 billion.

The Department of Agriculture's budget is more than P97 billion, more than four times our DA budget. It is clear that our DA budget should be significantly increased.

Two conditions

However, if the additional DA budget is used improperly, this budget should be disapproved by the two Congress. Two conditions for the DA budget must therefore be met.

The first condition is that the program must actually help the agricultural sector and not be used for political purposes and even corruption.

One mechanism toward this end is to subject all proposed programs to the discipline of budgeting at the social, economic and political returns of investment (ROR), in the same way the National Economic Development Authority (Neda) reviews projects.

In the irrigation area, Secretary Yap is to be commended for announcing that the DA will not build any more dams. The money will be spent to repair irrigation canals, and not to build new ones.

From an NGO point of view, this is 100 utterly going in the right direction. It costs 10 times more to build a new irrigation dam than to repair the existing canals.

The second condition is a transparent system to ensure accountability for these funds.

Such a system has also been provided by law, but has not been implemented. The Agriculture and Fisheries Council and Fishery Councils (FARC) are government-private sector bodies that have seven times given the opportunity to look at DA budget activities. This should start immediately.

Recommendations

We recommend that the new Congress look at the DA as a critical development force and approve the proposed P32.7 billion budget.

They should also ensure that the much-needed cash on the case of ROR process, as well as ensuring a transparent system that will provide accountability.

Finally, instead of just calling DA officials during budget deliberations, both Houses of Congress should likewise call on farmer and fisherfolk leaders.

After all, they are the ones who feel betrayed by the previous inadequate and sometimes inappropriate DA budgets. It is time for their voices to be heard.

(The author is the chair of Agrinewsit, former Cabinet secretary for Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects, and former chair of the Senate Committee on agriculture, food and industry. For inquiries and suggestions, email agrinewsit@yahoo.com or alpha 852-9102 5125.

Transco seen earning from carbon credits

By Abigail L. Ho

REDUCING TRANSMISSION LOSSES WILL not only cut the selling rates of the National Transmission Corp. but will also allow it to sell carbon credits to developed countries that have to comply with the Kyoto Protocol.

Arnold Bell, country representative of global carbon credit brokerage Emissions Inc., said the drop in the state firm's transmission losses would mean less greenhouse gas emissions that would, in turn, generate carbon credits.

Under the Kyoto Protocol, of which the Philippines is one of the 162 signatories, firms that invest in renewable energy, energy efficiency, improved land use, forestry and agro-related practices, and methane control programs will generate emission credits that can be traded for or developed into financial instruments.

The same protocol requires developed countries to limit their greenhouse gas emissions, but at the same time allows them to purchase carbon credits that they can use to offset their excess carbon emissions.

Bell added that Transco could generate even more carbon credits by indicating to use its gas-called SF6 or sulfur hexafluoride.

SF6 is a widely used by power transmission and distribution companies to insulate high-voltage electrical equipment such as substations, circuit breakers and switchgears.

The mild fluorocarbon has much better insulation-cooling including pressure and chief executive Arthur Aguilar, regarding possible carbon emission reduction programs that would allow the state firm to cash in on carbon credits.

Aguilar said the other officials were quite "receptive" to the idea, he said.

There was no estimate yet of how much revenue Transco would be able to generate from carbon credits, however.

The Philippines as a whole can generate between $11 million and $200 million a year in the next five years from the sale of carbon credits due to investments in renewable energy.

RP not surrendering land to Chinese firms, Yap says

By Amy R. Remo

AGRICULTURE SECRETARY ARTHUR C. YAP yesterday said that the country was "not offering and surrendering land for Chinese investments" but rather, only facilitating the entry of Chinese investments.

In an answer to the point ad of the Bikoneng Maka-masang Democrats, Yap said in a briefing yesterday that the government had committed to assist foreign investors of any nationality in locating agribusiness lands where they can invest.

"There is no plan to lease agricultural lands to foreigners," Yap said.

Those 17 agreements, which cover biofuels, rice, corn and fisheries, were made in January this year during the Asean Leaders' Summit.

There were originally 19 agreements. However, the other two did not push through.

According to Cayetano Jr., MO-China desk officer, these "deals" are agreements between Chinese companies to come to the Philippines and invest in the agriculture sector.

Filipino agribusiness growers to export to China.

Yap clarified that these agreements were "private sector contracts" and that the government had not released money nor committed any bonds.

"These 19 MOUs [memorandum of understanding] are 'intents.' It's a great way to develop agriculture especially since there have not been too many investments given to this sector," Yap said.

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People, Events & Products

Panaf-DLSPS-GSB offers brand activation course

THE PHILIPPINE ASSOCIATION OF National Advertisers Foundation (Panaf) is offering a course on Brand Activation. This course is part of the first Graduate Diploma Program in Marketing Communications Management offered in partnership with De La Salle Professional Schools-Ramon V. del Rosario Sr. Graduate School of Business.

The course is designed for managers who are responsible for product services, marketing, business development, or sales channel management, especially those in Brand Marketing who will also be most helpful to those involved in this line of marketing or are looking at new career options.

The course will give the participants full appreciation on the use of the Brand Activation tools in the planning and implementing an integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) program. It is designed to provide outstanding learning by seminar, by doers with actual case studies and live discussion. Brand Activation strategies and techniques that will have immediate practical application back at the job.

All of the sessions are designed to be highly interactive, allowing for the substantial experience of the people emerge and be shared. Best practices on Brand Activation will also be tackled by discussants and resource speakers composed from companies and organizations with extensive experience in these fields such as: Bobby Sumulong-IBC program director, Red Republic-one managing director, Cinch Philippines, Interone Agency-managing director and chief creative officer Enzo Ilio, Jennifer Joy Asuncion-head, core services, Globe Telecom Inc. and Irine Hernandez-president and CEO, 360 Advertising & Marketing Inc.

As a result of attending this course, the participants will learn the dynamics applications of Brand Activation techniques within the context of IMC Management. They will also acquire and develop innovative marketing tools to support their customers by fine-tuning initiatives and learn about future trends in Brand Activation techniques from leading professionals in the field. At the end of the 24 hours, they will also be able to establish a network of marketing peers who can be excellent support to sources in the future.

The course will be capped by group project presentations by the staff demonstrate the participants' mastery of the various brand activation tools in an actual marketing case.

The course will run every Thursday (6 to 9 p.m.) from June 21 to Sep. 20 at the RGSC Phase 2B Building, Makati City. Furthermore, completion of the entire program entitles the graduate to credits in the pre-MBA courses in the De La Salle Professional Schools-Graduate School of Business (DLSPS-GSB) and MBA Program, provided that he/she meets all admission requirements. For inquiries, visit or call: DLSPS-GSB, 2/F James G. RGSC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City; Tel. No.: 750-8601 to 08 loc. 308. Look for Lainna Pangilinan.

METROBANK CITED FOR GOOD CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co. (Metrobank), the country's largest bank in assets, was recently mentioned in the 2007 The Asset Awards for Best in Corporate Governance. Metrobank first was president Aza Lim (left) received the award from The Asset chief editor Clayton Yu. The Asset Corporate Governance Ranking is based on a six-month survey conducted from September 2006 to March 2007. Participating companies were asked to complete a questionnaire to rate themselves in the basic principles of corporate governance. Institutional investors were likewise asked to rate or their choices of companies that practice good corporate governance. Capping off the selection process is a series of dialogues conducted by The Asset with senior executives to understand their respective approaches to corporate governance.

OLYMPIC VILLAGE IS AYALA MALLS MERCHANT REWARDS WINNER

Olympic Village was recognized as Ayala Malls Merchant Rewards Program's which was held at the Greenbelt 5 Park in Makati. The award was conferred to the Ayala Malls Merchant Rewards Program which was held at the Greenbelt 5 Park in Makati. The awards was conferred to the Ayala Malls Olympic Village has 150 merchants and is in the business of retailing to senior citizens, footwear, apparel and accessories. Shown (L to R) Ayala Malls Vice President and Market Manager, Chief operating officer

Kia Sorento, Carnival top TQI

KIA MOTORS CORP. RECENTLY announced that the 2007 Kia Sorento and Carnival (known as Sedona in some countries) both received top honors in Strategic Vision's 2007 Total Quality Index (TQI), leading the mid-size SUV and MPV segments respectively. Kia, one of the fastest growing automakers in the world, is also the most improved brand overall from the previous TQI survey. The US-based research firm calculates these results based on the overall ownership experience of a vehicle.

Strategic Vision surveyed more than 21,700 new car owners who purchased their 2007 vehicles during the October-December 2006 period, focusing on the first 90 days of vehicle ownership. The Total Quality Index is the premier measure of new vehicle ownership in the United States, and measures total ownership experience, encompassing positive and negative product experiences, reliability, dealership experiences and emotional attachment to a vehicle.

"The Total Quality Index is a true baseline in our car, as it is based directly on consumer feedback," said Len Rose, executive vice president and COO, SMA. "We are proud that the Sorento and Carnival have been recognized, they serve as prime examples of the continued effort Kia is making toward creating quality vehicles."

The 2007 Sorento also received a five-star crash safety rating, the highest rating possible, for all seating positions in the latest frontal and side impact crash tests conducted by the US Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), while the 2007 Carnival (Sedona) was selected by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) as one of only 13 vehicles to earn the "Top Safety Pick" award for its impressive performance with top ratings in frontal, side and rear impact crash tests, and was awarded the "Value of the Year Award" by Car Book (2007).

The Carnival (Sedona) has also picked up the 2007 MotorWeek "Best Minivan" award in a 2006 Driver Satisfaction Survey, while both the Sorento and Carnival (Sedona), along with six other Kia models, picked up The Car Book (2007)'s "Best Buy" distinction. Overall, Kia models improved 22 percent in J.D. Power and Associates 2006 Initial Quality Study (IQS), and improved twice as much as any competitor in the last three years, showing how the company continues to offer world-class quality and award-winning customer satisfaction.

Trisco complies with net worth requirement

ONE OF TEN NOT EMERGING NON-LIFE INsurance companies has complied June 1 with the P280-million net worth requirement which the Insurance Commission imposes upon non-life insurance companies for the renewal of their Certificates of Authority (to operate) for the current year pursuant to the R.A. Insurance Code (P.D. 1460).

Travellers Insurance and Surety Corp. (Trisco), through its board of directors, issued such calls to its stockholders of record on their outstanding stock subscriptions amounting to P46,875,000. Aggregate partial payments of subscriptions as of June 1, following the such calls has reached P30,000,000, thereby increasing the net worth of the company to P306,595,464.48 in compliance with the IC's Department Order. The company encourages its stockholders to fully pay the balances of their subscriptions before the end of the third quarter of this year.

Trisco is one of the 13 insurers named by the IC that have not reached the P280-million net worth mark, which rules insurers can write in terms limits on retained broad shorts several days ago.

Trisco, a 40-year old company has increased its authorized capital stock on March 15, 2006 from the original P50 million to P300 million. Subscribed capital stock on the increase (of P250 million) amounts to P62.5 million, P46.875 million of which is paid up. Present paid-up capital is P93.625 million.

Over the last four years, Trisco has expanded its market to 32 key cities in the Philippines (Makati, Kalookan (Caloocan), San Fernando (Pampanga), San Pablo City, Legaspi City, Bacolod, Cagayan De Oro, Dagupan City, Iloilo, Cebu, Davao, and General Santos.

Eton not involved in cases, firm says

By Dwin L. Luza

THE REALTORS FIRM IS TYCOON LUCIO C. Tan yesterday sought to ease potential buyers' concerns over its possible involvement in the government's sequestration cases against the Chinese-Filipino businessman.

In a briefing yesterday, officials of Eton Properties Philippines Inc. said that the firm—still officially known as Rafabon Resources and Holdings Inc. —was "not involved in any litigation issues pending before [any] bodies relative [to] ownership issues with the government."

Eton president Imelda Ignacio said yesterday that the company had received assurances from clients about its potential involvement in the controversial cases, especially after Eton Bay Pavilionat "Bonifacio" 8, Mactan II, agreed to help the government collect 300 pesetas in condominium dues, which were allegedly illegally acquired.

"Neither is [Eton] one of the sequestered companies under the Cojuangco Group being pursued by the PCGG [Presidential Commission on Good Government]," Ignacio said.

She added that these sequestration orders of the PCGG against Tan's firms had been lifted and declared null and void as early as 1986 and 2006 by the Sandiganbayan.

"In layman's terms, the said sequestration orders were rendered as nonissues of the ownership rights of the said Lucio Tan companies, which include Allied Banking Corp., among others," he said.

Ignacio said that the company had received potential buyers about their concerns and pointed out that sales have so far been unaffected by the developments.

The company made this statement as it formally unveiled plans for the development of Eton Baypark Manila on a property at the corner of Roxas Boulevard and T.M. Kalaw St. in Manila.

The move follows the strong take up of Eton's first residential project, The Eton Residences Greenbelt, which is now almost sold out after only two months on the market.

The company envisions four Baypark Manila to cater to Manila-based businessmen and entrepreneurs, especially those based in the mostly financials district.

The 22-story condominium offers buyers studio units at P2.6 million and three-bedroom units worth P8 million.

Ignacio said that 40 percent of the project's units being offered for sale have already been reserved by potential clients.

Eton is the first property development venture of Tan's eldest son Carlos Tan, who is also the country's richest man with an estimated net worth of $1.3 billion.

The company has several projects in the pipeline including the so-called Eton Mega City which will rise on the 1,000-hectare Iran-Filipinas property in Santa Rosa, Laguna.

The Eton has earmarked P30 billion for the development of seven priority projects over the next few years.

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Moody's says RP finances better, but reforms needed

By Michelle V. Ratna

MANILA, THE MOODY'S INVESTORS SERVICE has recognized the government's improving financial position, but said more measures needed to be implemented for the Philippines to better compete with its neighbors.

Thomas Byrne, Moody's vice president and author of the ratings firm's annual report on the Philippines, acknowledged that more foreign direct investments were coming into the Philippines.

But the amount of FDIs still paltry in comparison with those entering other countries, he added.

"Overall weaknesses in the Philippines' investment climate are reflected in lagging fixed capital formation which, at a share of 16.8% has declined to one of the lowest levels among emerging market economies," Moody's said in the summary of the report entitled "The Philippines 2007 Credit Analysis."

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas earlier reported FDIs for P73.8 million in the first quarter, up 18.5 percent from the P699 million recorded in the same period last year.

"Foreign direct investment in the country has picked up, but more progress in the privatization of the power sector would add to inflows and also catalyze investment in other sectors," Byrne added.

The Arroyo administration's economic managers attributed the increase in FDIs to factors like the reduced budget deficit of the government, slowdown in inflation and low interest rates.

Moody's opined that the Philippines had made a substantial progress in its fiscal sector, but added that it has a long way to go to ease its debt burden as levels comparable with those of other emerging economies.

"Progress made in revenue reform and fiscal consolidation in 2006, and prospects for sustainable gains over the near term, support a stable ratings outlook," Byrne said.

"Debt management has benefitted the average term and helped to narrow spreads, but effective tax administration and prudent expenditure policies are needed for the long-term stability of the country's finances," he added.

The government's budget deficit was cut to only P64.8 billion last year from P126.8 billion in 2005. This year, the government targets to further trim the budget gap to only P61 billion and post a balanced budget by 2008.

Stocks shoot ...

From page B1

recorded on June 4 at 3,022.94.

The broader all-share index gained 40.00/0.00 to 1,894.11.

Breadth was positive, with 124 gainers and 56 losers, while 31 issues remained unchanged.

Value turnover was P6.88 billion, with a total of 6.889 billion shares changing hands. Futures posted losers 196 to 52.

"Local bulls were awakened by the overseas market," said Stella del Castillo, managing director at First Grady Holdings Inc. "Almost all markets were on a run. The investors all time high validation may be the first prospects are indeed better. The bulls are nibbling unabated territory. We think the next level is 3,100."

Analysts earlier expressed concern that rising bond yields in the United States would trigger a capital rate hike by the US Federal Reserve, the equivalent of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

"Lower bond yields in the US translates to lower borrowing costs for Philippine companies that will expand profit margins and boost earnings growth, which is good for stock markets," said Raul Joseph Garcia, chief investment officer at PNB Investment Management. "But a rose for Philippine companies who have US debts."

Del Castillo said first, at home, investors are watching out for developments in the fiscal reforms before disappointing first quarter figures.

"The only thing that will turn away the bulls is poor fiscal collection of government for another quarter," he said.

In the first quarter of the year, the Bureau of Internal Revenue collected only P143 billion in taxes, falling short of the P155 billion goal set by the government for the three-month period.

This resulted in a budget deficit of P52 billion, exceeding the projected ceiling of P45.8 billion.

Also, according to Moody's Investors Service, Philippine economic policy has yet to translate into fiscal successes in fiscal consolidation to improved underlying performance in the economy.

"Effective tax administration and prudent expenditure policies are needed for the ... stability of the country's finances," the ratings agency said.

In its annual report, Moody's said the "B1" foreign and local currency government bond ratings on the country reflect its relatively high sovereign debt burden, lagging government finances and external vulnerability to shocks.

However, Moody's said progress in revenue reform and bond market development is a stable ratings outlook, and that the "adjustment of payments is supported by a flexible exchange rate policy, stable export production base, sizable remittance inflows from overseas workers, and outstanding foreign direct investments." With a report from AFP

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INNOVATIONS at La Herrenia includes an electric bobbin winder that mechanizes the spooling process

Worker loses job, finds creative pursuit

Text and photos by Raoul P. Villa
Inquirer Visayas

Learns initial ropes from mother, grows the venture

BALIBO, NEGROS...WHAT DOES IT TAKE FOR a businessman to survive the growing up pains of a provincial enterprise, characterized by persistent demands for improved products, and a finicky market?

Patience, perseverance, hard work, creativity, enthusiasm for innovations, and a never-say-die attitude—if you ask Allan Tambolero, the 44-year-old owner of Allan's top home weaving company specializing in pillowcloth.

He does not say outright that he has clear values, but the story of La Herrenia Pillo Weaving Factory in Kabibo that started in early 1996 with a start up capital of P15,000 is testimony to Tambolero's ability to resolve the problems of a typical provincial SME (small and medium enterprise).

Laid off from his work at the local Department of Public Works and Highways, Tambolero channeled his initial disappointment

STORY, B6-4

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Sea cucumber industry gets needed attention

CHARTS showing the different species of sea cucumber in the country

By Yolanda Santin-Fuerzas
Inquirer Northern Luzon

DAGUPAN CITY—THE SEA CUCUMBER INDUSTRY in the country, which is already threatened by over exploitation, finally got the attention it deserved from fishery authorities during a two-day national forum here last week.

The country is the second largest exporter of processed cucumber (trepang) in Indonesia, according to Nicolas Pantastico, research extension director of the National Fisheries Research and Development Institute (NFRDI) and chief of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources research center here.

Pantastico says there is a continuous "high demand" for sea cucumber products in the world market because of the recent discovery of medical, pharmaceutical and other commercial applications.

However, there are no research and development, no policies on exports and no laws on fisheries to guide management for the commodity, he says.

The country has been exporting sea cucumbers since the 16th century and processing cucumber count under stable eighth among the Philippines major fishery exports.

Dr. Maria Victoria Eusebio-Muñoz, professor of the University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute, says while there are no data to show that sea cucumbers are overexploited due to international trade of processed meat, there is a general perception that it is on the verge of collapse based on "anecdotal reports of collectors views getting smaller and sites getting deeper."

Zoilo Muñoz says the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is expected to include two species of the sea cucumber (Holothuriidae and Stichopodidae) on its list by October 2008.

"This means that the country should limit or regulate the export of sea cucumbers from the wild, their parts or derivatives and should impose regulatory measures on annual quota and fees for exports.

Eusebio says the NFRDI is establishing a hatchery for sea cucumbers at the BFAR research center here. Personnel assigned to the hatchery would be trained by scientists working on the commodity in Australia and New Caledonia.

"We are confident in terms of technology because our partners are international scientists," he says.

The latest that will be produced will be used for restocking leaving centers to be put up at marine research areas at the Hundred Islands National Park in Alaminos City and Bolinao town, both in Pangasinan, and in Mindanao.

MOSTLY found at the National Fisheries Research Development Institute's station, shows a power boosting diffusion species of sea cucumber in the country

People's organizations involved in marine protection will also be trained on sea ranching, Nimat says.

"We have to make sure that the wild is maintained and managed," Junio-Muñoz says.

There are some 100 known species of sea cucumber in the country but only 50 are harvested commercially.

Dr. Ruth Gamboa, a professor of UP Diliman, says sea cucumbers thrive both on sea from sand and reef areas.

They are "nature farmers" of the sea, burrowing deep into the sand, loosening up the top layer of sea floor so other organisms can have oxygen, Gamboa says.

Her allusion of sea grass beds and reefs means loss of habitats for sea cucumbers, further endangering their existence and "reproductive rate."

Nonetheless cases are specific for the sea cucumbers in reproduce, Junio-Muñoz says.

Sea cucumbers are exported mostly to China, where they are in demand as a delicacy.

"With the influence of China, [where Chinese] are indiscriminate and will buy anything, Junio-Muñoz says.

Sea cucumbers are considered aphrodisiac and as cure for arthritis, wounds and high blood pressure.

An international company in the United States has also developed sea cucumbers as base for nutritional formulas for humans and pets.

A study by Cherine Pantalo, which the Department of Science and Technology awarded in 1986, found that sea cucumbers have properties that prevent cancer and cancers.

Gamboa says sea cucumbers have no taste but have high protein content.

Processed cucumber meat can be found in supermarkets with the names "Sea," "Haha," or "Trepang," Junio-Muñoz said. Per original cuts in prices, from P600 to P3,000 a kilogram, depending on the species.

Worker loses job ...

From page B4-1

to the creative pursuit of loom weaving with his mother, Herminia, Jude.

"It's in the start of the business where all the problems are. I don't know anything about business and I had no materials," says Tumbokon, who with his wife Nelda, have become adept at weaving after getting pointers from Herminia.

Eleven years after and a wealth of priceless experience, La Herminia has 150 regular employees, with some 120 added to the workforce depending on the amount of orders from fashion designers and textile producers here and abroad.

At the start of the business, the engineering graduate of Adamson University knew that he had to find a way to make the production of the delicate and airy fabric (from the pineapple plant Ananas comosus (Linn) meet faster to meet deadlines imposed by buyers. By then, Tumbokon had started a working relationship with Akiatu Incorporated of Tondo and instantly that union bore out as textile creations Canada from June 9 to July 3, 2000 to pub patrons from the different weaving equipment of the La Cuesta dos Textiles Contemporains de Montreal.

Where he got the know, Tumbokon introduced an electric bobbin winder that enabled La Herminia to mechanize the spooling process. Tumbokon, with a local craftsman, also came up with semi-mechanized looms with flying shuttles that can also be operated by a single person instead of two.

This new technique made it possible for La Herminia to weave various lengths as wide as 120 inches and the establishment to finally participate in the Manila Fashion Week, Manila Rendezvous and Signature (PARE) International Trade Fair in October 2002. The company's participation, in turn, opened it to the possibilities of exporting its products.

It was at the Manila PARE that La Herminia became known for its spun silk thread, pina cloth clothes (pina woven with silk) and fabrics made of exotic fibre blends, which according to the BTI, are still the business of both local and international fashion designers.

INTRIGUE, perseverance, hard work, creativity, enthusiasm for innovations, and never-say-die attitude are key to success for Tumbokon

Tumbokon acknowledges the UP and the provincial leadership of Aklan for giving him the good breaks, by sending him not only to management seminars, but also to training him in financial consultancy.

He now has three weaving centers in Aklan, each with a specialization. The Tangalan Center specializes in producing silk textile cloth, the Balete Center in weaving "trappings" or traditional cloth, and the Kalibo Center focuses on basic products and engages in product development. In April 2004, La Herminia was adjudged "Best Product Design" at the Manila PARE International Textile Award/Fashion Competition and in the same year, the Bureau of Cottage and Small Scale Industries, through the Aklan Handicraft Promotion and Development Association, gave La Herminia the "Seal of Excellence Award."

"It is difficult to train people. What we need is patience and passion.

Sometimes, in their drive to earn, the quality of their work is sacrificed," says Tumbokon, who also trained under the Philippine Textile Research Institute.

A worker who weaves for eight hours on a cloth with a design can finish in three hours by a half many who weave on one meter of "plain weave" can finish in one day.

Those working on plain weave are paid P3,000 a month while those weaving cloth with designs are paid P5,000 to P8,000 a month, depending on the intricacy of the design.

"I learned one important thing—that a person who used to have nothing but improved his life because of this weaving industry," says Tumbokon, seemingly speaking for himself.

The DTI's records show that 43 La Herminia weavers are Social Security System and PhilHealth members. On the other hand, 15 weavers enjoyed improved lifestyles, some renovated their nipa and bamboo houses into concrete while others bought motorcycles and appliances—all thanks to being employed at La Herminia.

There is currently a new passion a-brewing at La Herminia's three centers as weavers strive to fill orders from Manila, Laguna, Cebu, the United States, Japan, France, and Hong Kong.

Meanwhile, contrary to Tumbokon's 1,000-square-meter lot, which he bought with company profits, is Balete's own, are busy raising Tagum and Talisay trees that will provide the natural dyes for pina cloth cloth, shawls, cushion covers and hangings.

There's no stopping the businessman from saying out new things and we can only look forward to the ways he would be developing the pina fabric and putting this unique Philippine lifestyle product in the international limelight.

ABLAZE business man Jesse Tumbokon with wife Nelda show loom-woven products that fashion designers here and abroad seek

Betting on healing powers of VCO

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

MAY VILLA IS A BELIEVER IN THE healing and cosmetic properties of virgin coconut oil.

This is why the 36-year-old entrepreneur is betting her time and money into a business that will showcase cosmetics products made of virgin coconut oil to the export market.

Now formally now formally put up in 2004 to manufacture, market and distribute so-called nutraceuticals or dietary supplements supposed to make a person more healthy, such as the Nutrilife and Health Pearls.

In the course of her research, she discovered and soon became a disciple spreading the gospel of virgin coconut oil.

"I read so much about it, all those good benefits from virgin coconut oil.

And I thought it was a good business opportunity because we have a lot of virgin coconut oil here," Villa says.

Villa soon became one of the first to market in pin coconut oil for internal use in 2004.

The claim was that a person can maintain good health and cure a host of ailments, even heart disease, by taking at least a tablespoon of virgin coconut oil a day.

She poured good sales, but then she decided to get out of it after three years when she noticed that the market was getting crowded and profit margins were getting squeezed.

Not ready to give up virgin coconut oil altogether, she focused for a new business: cosmetics and she found it in skin care.

Villa says that virgin coconut oil not only good at keeping the internal organs in top condition, it also helps a person's blood circulate well and body's detoxed.

Tapping the expertise of chemists and researchers, Stomatodex developed a line of skin care products made of virgin coconut oil, now being marketed under the brand name CocoCare.

"We used the natural products in the development and we used as much of the local products as we could, such as the rose and the citrus scents, and of course, the virgin coconut oil," Villa says.

The local products were the rose and citrus scents of massage oils and body lotion with no hint of the signature sweet smell of coconut oil.

For CocoCare to fight its way into the highly competitive skin care market, Villa says she has developed one of the signatures like Watson's and Mercury.

"I had to be selective because it is very expensive to go into the supermarket," Villa says.

The Singapore industry is also a source that Villa knows well having started off as a medical representative for Glaxo after graduating from college in 1992.

She says it was in fact the doctors that she dealt with in her close to three-year career as a medical representative who encouraged her to go into business.

"They told me I should put up my own company. They said, why work for somebody else when you can put up your own," she says.

They knew that being a corporate person will not be hard for Villa since her parents were into business, particularly hog and poultry raising in Villa's home province of Iloilo.

Villa also reportedly heeded her friends' advice and with capital borrowed from her parents, she went into the distribution of pharmaceutical products in the

VILLA

Cagayan Valley.

But after three and a half years, she became restless.

"I realized that I would not be able to grow if I will stay based in the province, so I thought of putting up a company in Manila," she says.

The company became Holistic Pharma, which was put up in 1998 to import products from Korea and became a vall manufacturer for medicines, such as analgesics and injectibles.

"I did not have any medical representatives, I distributed through other companies," she says.

But again, while Holistic flourished, she had the restless. She wanted to move.

"I guess what I really wanted was to have a product that is really mine. I have always wanted to develop a homegrown product that can be exported with raw materials sourced here," Villa says.

That product is CocoCare, which she says she is about to export to the United States, Singapore and Japan.

"I believe in its potential for growth and it is a good business to be in because it is a product that is natural. It comes from farmers who supply us with the raw materials," she says.

In an attempt to boost sales, Villa tapped Ingenuis cosmetics and health supplements to be its exclusive local partner in developing a product line called the Forever Young line.

"It took us about six months to develop the Forever Young kit, which is primarily for the mature skin that is under one of the body treatment boxes.

Villa says the 100 line upscale more to the older women, while the other line is focused for the younger set, especially those who are into sports and they are the ones in need for a quick energy boost.

She says she is investing in traditional advertising in both broadcast in print to increase awareness of her product as well as below the line marketing activities, such as participation in events and trade shows.

During the 2005 trade show of Glaxo, for instance, CocoCare's manager oil was awarded "Best Product" during the many reproducts fair.

Villa is just starting to fully explore the opportunities in the virgin coconut oil based products and she believes that there is a huge niche for overseas.

She also attributes to the growing awareness of the benefits of natural products, such as virgin coconut oil.

"It takes advantage of the growing demand. Nutraceutics is currently formulating more products, such as body scrubs, body lotion and lip balm, and we have more plans to venture out with a full line of CocoAir products that will take us not just the Philippines, but the rest of the world.

Medical tourism: A booming industry

By Fritz-Erich J. Balderia and Jose A. Chanco
ABA & Co

SOME PEOPLE MAY HAVE ARGUMENTS against an interdependent world economy. Nevertheless, this phenomenon has rewarded the Filipino's competitive edge in the international market—our service industry. This industry is responsible all around us in the emergence of all kinds of outsourcing companies. Indeed, the Philippines is becoming a haven of a technical services nation.

One lucrative opportunity currently being developed is medical tourism. Medical tourism is the travel of foreign patients to the Philippines to avail of quality but affordable healthcare services, for treatment of illnesses and health problems. Just like in the outsourcing businesses, medical tourism particular is has great potential because of the skills of our medical practitioners. They possess advanced knowledge that meets international standards. They are fluent in English which allows them to communicate easily with foreign patients. Moreover, Filipino hospitality is another kind of rare, comparative and sensitivity that patients find quite appealing. Of course, domestic health providers have lower maintenance costs and practitioners have lower professional fees compared to their foreign counterparts.

The concept of medical tourism should not be something new to Filipinos. It has been reported that, as early as the 70s, both healers were already offering package tours to foreigners who were seeking treatment using alternative means. Some healers even had their own clinic so that accommodation were already part of the package. This business is not surprising since the Philippines is considered as the divine and epicenter of faith healers. Nevertheless, this declined after several years.

At present, the government is continually crafting measures to provide special incentives for this emerging industry. The Bureau of Investments ("BOI") has included medical tourism as part of the investment Priorities Plan ("IPP") for 2006 to 2009. A Philippine Medical Tourism Program has been established, pursuant to Executive Order No. 672, to attract foreign clients to the Philippines for medical care and health wellness. The first ever Philippine Medical Congress was launched towards the end of last years. In Congress, House Bill No. 5696, which provided further fiscal and non-fiscal incentives to investors, is pending approval. At present, fiscal and non-fiscal incentives are available if the enterprise is registered with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority ("PEZA") or with the BOI.

PEZA Resolution No. 06-111 presents for two areas of medical tourism investments that may be registered and, thereafter, be granted incentives. In the first area, the Resolution enumerates a number of medical tourism medical services that can be registered. These enterprises and activities must cater primarily to foreign patients, must comply with Department of Health ("DOH") standards, and must secure DOH endorsement. Endorsement from the DOH means that the medical enterprise has passed its accreditation from the Philippine Council for Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations ("PCAHO") or from the Joint Commission International ("JCI").

The fiscal incentives under this area include: (1) four years Income Tax Holiday ("ITH") or income subsidy depending on the activity; (2) duty-free importation of medical equipment. The two non-fiscal incentives are: (1) employment of foreign nationals and (2) a grant of the Special Investor's Resident Visa.

The second area of investments refers to the registration of medical tourism parks or centers. The medical parks and centers have to be located in poverty areas as identified in accordance with the National Policy Framework for Implementing Medical Tourism Program of the DOH. The park may be an existing, new or proposed complex which has a minimum lot area of one hectare. On the other hand, the center may be an existing, new or proposed medical hospital or stand-alone building that is host to specialized medical clinics and other specialized medical related activities. A stand-alone building, other than a medical hospital, shall have a minimum floor area of 5,000 square meters for Metro Manila and Cebu City and 2,000 square meters minimum floor area for the provinces. The fiscal incentives for resources zone developers or operators of proposed and practically developed medical tourism parks or centers located outside Metro Manila and Cebu City shall be entitled to pay a special five percent tax on gross income, in lieu of all national and local taxes, except real property tax on land.

If the enterprise is not located in an economic zone under PEZA, it may be registered under the BOI. The incentives under BOI are the following: (1) Income Tax Holiday for four to six years if it is a new project; (2) Income Tax Holiday for three years on incremental sales revenue if the project is existing or for expansion; (3) additional deduction from taxable income for labor expense; and (4) modified duty rate on imported equipment. As of late last year, the BOI is yet to formulate a tailor fit investment package for the medical tourism industry to such, registration under the PEZA may give more incentives.

The Philippine medical industry may be facing some problem such as migration of health care practitioners, and lack of investment to update technology and conduct research. In any case, it is clear that medical tourism is gaining ground in the service arenas. The Philippines currently ranks 58th in medical tourism behind Asian countries like Thailand, India, Malaysia and Singapore, in that order. Cooperation between the public and private sectors is needed to nurture this drive towards our competitive edge. Perhaps, even faith healing or alternative medicine will be included in some of the medical tourism packages.

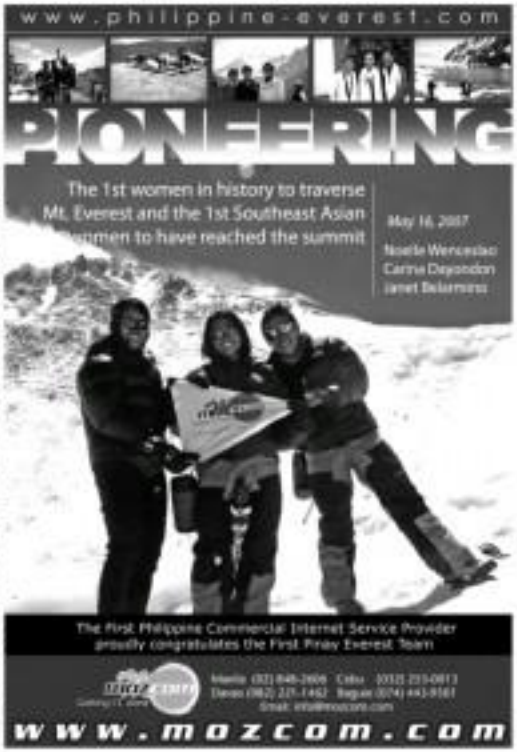
TAX-FILES

New insurance products

MAYNILAD LIFE INTRO duces new insurance policies and riders.

Maynilad Life Insurance Company of the Philippines (MLIP), the first full service insurance company of Maynilad Life Insurance Japan, has launched a new set of insurance products for the past.

The company has added four insurance plans and five insurance riders in its product menu. These include upgraded Prime Value series, Fixed and Retirement Flexibility, Waiver of Premium, Critical Illness Waiver, Critical Illness Benefit, Critical Illness Plus and the Hospitalization Benefit Rider.



BUSINESS Friday

Be an Inquirer.

The replacements

Q: WE JUST GOT A MANDATE FROM OUR global office to kill one of our products. It is in a really strong market and has attained an equally strong participation in it. After some months, we've identified a suitable replacement product. How should we introduce this replacement product to the same market base? What will guarantee a smooth transition?

A: There are of course many considerations at stake. We'd like to focus on two key considerations: (1) transitioning with customers, and (2) transitioning with your sales people.

Your major concern (among many others) is transitioning with your customers is how to transfer the image of quality of the replaced brand to the replacing brand. Assuming that product development has succeeded in giving the quality of the replaced brand to the replacing brand, the issue of smooth transition with customers becomes a matter of reporting to the minds of consumers the replaced brand with the replacing brand.

One way of accomplishing this is to follow the process of conditioning that Ivan Pavlov, the Russian physiologist, successfully demonstrated in his experiment with dogs. Pavlov, who was actually doing research on the role of salivation on the digestive system, discovered that his dog will still salivate from just the ringing of a bell without food being served. This will happen once the dog has been conditioned to associate the ringing of a bell and the serving of food. The conditioning process goes along these steps:

Ring a bell; serve food; dog salivates.
Ring a bell; serve food; dog salivates.
Ring a bell; serve food; dog salivates.
Serve food, ring a bell; dog salivates.
Serve food, ring a bell; dog salivates.
Ring a bell; dog salivates.

The ringing of the bell has successfully been embedded in the dog's brain as the same as the serving of the food. So with just the ringing of the bell, it salivated even without food being served.

Now will this work with your replaced and replacing brands? For cosmic explanation, let's give a name to each of the brands here and let's say we're talking about an instant noodle soup category. Call the replaced brand as "Yu sweet instant Instant Noodle Soup" and the replacing brand as "Bayco Instant Noodle Soup." Now, let's say that your global headoffice gives you two and half or three years to follow to mandate. How's how the transfer of the meaning of quality soup will happen when you do this-to, say, the brand package. Please observe the differences in the type size.

1st half year: Interconti Instant Soup, Bayco Soup; Quality Noodle Soup.

2nd half year: Interconti Instant Soup, Bayco Soup; Quality Noodle Soup.

3rd half year: Bayco Soup, Interconti Instant Soup; Quality Noodle Soup.

4th half year: Bayco Soup, Interconti Instant Soup; Quality Noodle Soup.

5th half year: Bayco Soup; Quality Noodle Soup.

Can this really happen? Yes and it did happen precisely in Bayco Soup of Endown way back in the '80s. And it has happened and continues to happen to quite a few other brands faced with a similar dilemma. Did you notice the way the Magnolia ice cream brand name was slowly phased out by the Nestlé brand name when Nestlé bought Magnolia? (Nestlé bought Magnolia ice cream in 1995 from San Miguel Corp. In 2004 the Magnolia brand ice cream was replaced by San Miguel.) Anyway, Nestlé did the brand name replacement/conditioning game in the same manner. First it was:

Magnolia Nestlé Ice Cream.

Then it became Nestlé Magnolia Ice Cream

Then it was just Nestlé Ice Cream

Condition your consumer the same way Pavlov did so that they accept changes and replacements easily and smoothly. (By the way, Pavlov did win a Nobel Prize in 1904 for his research work on "conditioning." So apply this Nobel Prize-winning technique to your marketing and you'll see consumers "salivating" for your product.)

Now, what about the second consideration concerning the effect on your sales people?

We're often asked: "Why are the sales people a major consideration?" This question has a simple answer. In any company, sales people are responsible for generating sales. We suppose that's why we call their department the sales department. Anything that affects the sales people's motivation and capacity to deliver sales should obviously concern any company's top management.

If the thrust to be replaced brand is a leading brand, it's easy to appreciate that this is a major source of sales, incentives and bonus for your sales people. That's your least basic problem here. For your sales people it's all about their take-home pay.

So address this concern directly. Give a rebate or assurance that sales from the replacing brand will be equal to and will grow just as much as the replaced brand. Back up this assurance with a good and doable plan to make it happen. A key part of that plan is your campaign to get the quality image of the replaced brand effectively transferred to the replacing brand.

Present that plan of yours to your sales force and discreetly solicit comments and suggestions. Get more and more of your sales people to buy in into the transition and become part of the solution instead of being part of the problem.

Keep your questions coming. Send them to us at marketingrx@pldtdsl.net. com. Guildhall

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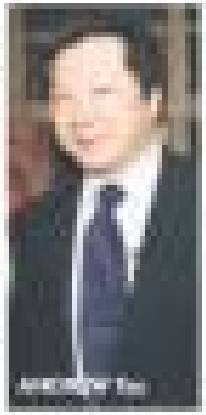
PHILIPS AND WWF. Philips Electronics and Lighting Inc. and the World Wide Fund for Nature (Philippines) recently signed a memorandum of understanding to join forces and combat climate change. Under the Climate Savers Program, Philips and WWF will work hand-in-hand in creating various awareness programs to prevent global warming with simple and practical solutions on energy management. The partnership allows Philips to carry the "Climate Savers" logo in all of its energy-efficient lighting products. Photo shows WWF-Philippines Exec. Ms. Lorenzo Tan and Philips CEO Rico A. Gonzales.

Zobel, SyCip, taipans join PCCI

PCCI MEMBERS Somchai Akaraviputh Jr., Jose U. Perdo, Ambassador Francis Chua and Federico Lopez



Alberto Pedro Jr. with PCCI executives Jose Cruz, Antonio Lopez and Edgardo Lacson

PCCI CHAIR Francisco Miguel Varela, PCCI General Auditor Benjamin Punongbayan, Washington SyCip, PCCI President Susan Lim and Honorable Jimenez

Some top Philippine business leaders have formally joined the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI), forming the Chamber's Honorary Council of Advisers.

Under the leadership of PCCI president Susan Lim, the advisory body was formed to bolster PCCI's role as the "voice of Philippine business" and catalyst in creating wealth for the nation.

The Honorary Advisers will work in line with the Chamber's commitment to give the country a united, strong, united and competitive economic national pride under its "Give. Global. Filipino." mantra.

Lim said "it is high time to showcase the solidarity of the entire Filipino business community in moving the country forward. "The council will actively participate and give invaluable support to championing PCCI's objectives in policy advocacy, business key working and enhancing the Chamber's role in representing industries, local chambers and associations nationwide.

The PCCI board of directors formed a division of the council chaired by Jose Perez. The members of the council are its ambassadors or chairs Enrique Abeto, Ramon Ang, Jorge Ramos, Francis Chua, Ricardo Concepcion, Antonio Cojuangco, Antonio Cojuangco, Mercedes Jimenez, Oscar Lopez, Rafael Perez, Antonio Pesigan, Manuel Pangilinan, Jose Paz de, Enrique Razon, Henry Sy, Washington SyCip, Antonio Tan, Lucio Tan, Oscar Villena, George Ty, Al Jones, Wilfredo Zobel de Ayala.

The all-new Kia provides more standard horsepower than the Chevrolet Aveo, Toyota Echo and Hyundai Accent.

It also has a 1.4 liter DOHC engine that packs 97 horsepower and 131 Nm of torque that delivers optimum performance and fuel economy, thus providing excellent fuel economy of 11.7 km/l in a mix (based on 2006 ECE fuel economy test cycle).

The Rio is fitted with a 10 inch diameter front disc brakes coupled with antilock rear drum brakes, providing safe stopping power on any driving condition.

Better handling, smoother ride.

Unlike many B-segment sedans that offer live-axle, semi-trail suspension layouts, the all-new Kia features an independent front suspension and semi-independent rear suspension for responsive handling and ride comfort.

The Rio's suspension layout uses MacPherson struts with coil springs in front, and a torsion beam axle with coil springs in the rear, tuned to achieve a healthy balance between a comfortable ride and responsive handling. Front and rear stabilizer bars are standard on all Rio models. And aiding handling is a rack and pinion steering system.

The Rio's wider track and improved suspension and steering systems provide better handling characteristics and improved performance over the previous generation Rio. It longer wheelbase helped designers carve out more space for rear passengers while enhancing riding comfort.

More standard features

Convenience safety, as well as a long list of standard entertainment features, is one of the defining qualities of Kia's newest subcompact sedan. The all-new Rio was engineered to provide a quiet, relaxed drive ride that would complement the vehicle's improved performance and handling characteristics.

The all-new Kia Rio is available in two trim levels: Base and LX. Like all of Kia's vehicles, a generous list of standard features is made available for all Rio models, right from the start. For all Rio models, right from the start, standard features include air conditioning, power windows, power door locks, power mirrors, tilt steering wheel, AM/FM stereo with CD player, MP3 capability and four speakers, and dual front airbags.

The LX trim level offers additional standard equipment, including: full wheel covers, air conditioning, an AM/FM/CD audio system with four speakers, 60/40 split-folding rear bench seat and height-adjustable driver's seat.

A Power Package – only available on the LX model – features power windows and door locks, power heated outside mirrors, front door mounted tweeter speakers and steering lamps with complete folder.

Just recently, the Kia Rio has been awarded by the Philippine Car Awards Group Inc. as "Best Sub-compact vehicle for 2006."

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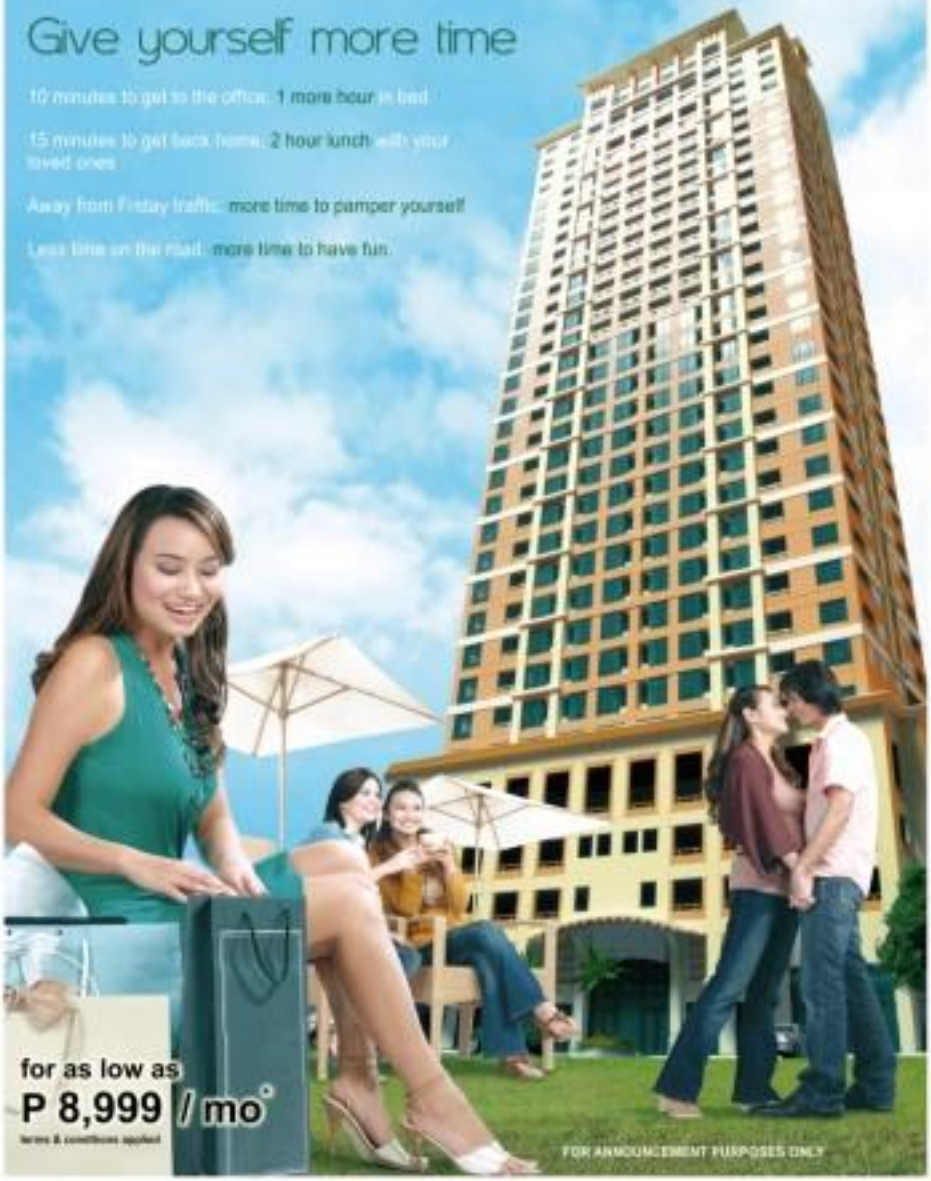

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FASHION

Mod squad

The Scissors Dress
Black-and-white shift dress with asymmetrical hem, sleeves and collar

Designing ad man

Before plunging full-time into the crowded and competitive world of haute couture, James Reyes worked for 11 years as a graphic designer for Campaigns & Grey

By Rita Y. Vergara

TAKE IT FROM JAMES Reyes, it's never too late to leave behind your comfort zone and shift careers. In his case, it took the fashion designer more than a decade to finally heed his true calling.

By virtue of his strong showing in a series of fashion shows over the last two years, Reyes is arguably one of the hottest young designers to be coming today.

Not only does his clothes show an unconventional skill in cutting, they also reveal his keen eye for proportion as well as an intellectual slide, which isn't lost on most of the times' top fashionistas.

"I don't want to be labeled as a revolutionary or avant-garde designer," he says one laid-back evening in his third-floor atelier in Makati. "For from it... I like to keep my clothes simple but sexy enough for the women here and there."

Before plunging full-time into the crowded and competitive world of haute couture

BUSINESSWEEK C3

The Bulb Dress
Shift dress in gunmetal grey bridal satin with light bulb-shaped pearls at hem and bateau neck

Designing ad man

The Casino Dress
Black satin shift dress with cube-draped cup sleeves decorated with white buttons

The Chandelier Dress
White satin shift dress with chiffon-draped sleeves featuring a hand-painted chandelier decorated with black beads and crystals

Photography (dress by) Solange-editor Mikel Arceo
Makeup Patrick Ross
using Patrick Ross G-Itch collection, available at Rustan's Cosmetic
Hair Hair2Heaven (0926.714.1124)
Model Mia Ayeza
Design James Reyes (0917.6236.182)

From page C1

sometimes in 2004. Reyes needed his 11 years as a graphic designer for Campaign & Grey.

Reyes was already the ad agency's art director when he decided to leave everything behind and open a shop. His experiences as an artist (he also painted) seems to be serving him well as he tackles on a different and decidedly more unpredictable medium.

"I've always been interested in clothes even since I can remember," he says. "In fact, I used to do fashion sketches when I was in high school."

His mom and a small circle of close friends benefitted from his talent. Come enrollment time, however, Reyes chose the more practical route by taking up fine arts's major in advertising at the University of the Philippines.

Through the years, amid long days and sleepless nights (serving as the scourge of deadlines), sometimes impossible clients, his love for fashion never waned.

First mentor

Reyes credits designer Ivog Gerona, one of the first mentors, for keeping the flame alive. The wannabe designer used to hang out in Gerona's shop after having his clothes made.

"I used to stay there for hours during my free time," he says. "I got to talk to Ivog and his clients and I would realized that that was the kind of life I wanted."

His desire to shift careers was further fueled in 2000 when becomes Lifestyle asked him to do a series of sketches based on the latest women's fashion. His drawings landed on the paper's cover pages.

In between buying fashion books and attending basic pattern making at Slim's during weekends, Reyes, upon Gerona's encouragements, joined the Mega Young Designers' competition the following year.

Reyes reached the finals, together with Mitch Delos Alos, Ines Pigao and Joel Jacki Aseron. Later that year, Reyes and a number of finalists/ones from Mega joined the annual competition organized by the Fashion Design Council of the Philippines.

At first, would have it, his work was among the few creations chosen to represent the country in Paris. Through it all, he managed to hold on to his day job (he still does).

"Polly Ong, my boss at Campaign, knew that it was only a matter of time before she would lose me to fashion design," says Reyes. "She was very encouraging, but, at the same time, worried that I didn't have enough experience to run a business."

The affirmation he got from members of the prestigious Young Designers' Group (YDG) was perhaps what finally pushed Reyes to cross to the other side. Jemma Lucero, then president of YDG, invited him to join their group in 2009 rolled in.

New collection

Indeed, having it all behind and going into fashion design full-time was a perfect way to start a new year. Still, it took Reyes another two years before he mustered enough courage to strike out on his own.

"I quitted this shop in January 2008, and it's only now that I'm beginning to make money," he says with a knowing smile. "It helps that I deal directly with my owners. I also do the outing myself if I'm the only one who knows how a certain shirt is supposed to work."

His latest collection consisting of black-and-white shift dresses, which debuted sometime ago during Philippine Fashion Week, were quoted him. The idea wasn't his hair-do his audience, as each dress (mixed with enough visual puns that elicited smiles from even the most jaded fashionistas.

Drawing inspiration from surrealism and pop art, Reyes produced clean, symmetrical designs devoid of frilly bits and bits. (All the elegantly 'photos of several pieces plus two new versions accompany this article).

Huge patches in the form of contrasting silhouettes inspired by everyday objects (a la teapot, a chandelier, a cat and a hair) jutting down a supposed zipper honey their evening's background as a graphic artist, which suits Reyes just fine.

"I wanted to convey an instantaneous kind of visual humor," he says. "In work as people see this particular collection, I want it to them to immediately get the jobs without me having to explain it."

Indeed, old habits die hard. To a former ad man like James Reyes, the medium is still the message.

The Zipper Dress
White shift dress with a deep-slashed back with black satin pull-tie

War of the worlds

It won't come as a surprise if we see attractive Brazilians peddling laundry soap and instant noodles on TV and along Edsa any day soon

From page C1

to Malaysia (for protests local models from foreign competition by banning the latter from competing with locals for fashion shows).

"Foreign models are limited to doing runway shows in Malaysia," she said.

Above board

As far as Miss Flores, managing director of F Models, one of several modelling agencies that have mushroomed as a direct result of the fly-in phenomenon, is concerned, every transaction she and her foreign "imported" engage in is above board.

She also defended the entrance of the Malaysian law that she and not only would promote prosecutions, but also to encourage—surely—the advocates of globalization.

"I have a Slovakian model who did a couple of commercials ads in Malaysia," Flores claimed. "I also work closely with the Malaysian Airlines, an Australian I modelled, and we did several print ads and TVCs."

F Models has been in the business for a little over two years now, apart from a partner in his agency, Flores has partners in Singapore, Hong Kong and Canada who provide her with a steady supply of young, highly trained models fit for the Philippine markets.

These models are represented by modelling agencies specifically their home countries, which get a 10- to 15-percent commission from income they generate abroad, while agencies like those managed by Flores get a standard 30-percent cut.

"I had no permits for my models when I first started," she admitted. "It later became difficult for us to secure a three-month work permits for each model from the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation."

Flores thinks that it pays to play by the rules even if 15 minute shelling out P12,000-P15,000 per model to secure each permits.

Apart from opening F Models here, any legal headache that might crop up in the future, as saying much permits for her supplier gives the agency a certain degree of protection from deportation or more specious threats.

"It's a temporary risk," she added, "we don't get foreign models who are [aged] 18 and below."

Work permits

E. Domino, managing director of Chameleon International, gets work permits for her imports on a case-to-case basis.

Like F Models, Chameleon manages around 60 to seven foreign models at a given time. Unlike the former, however, it doesn't have a penchant for Brazilians.

"We're just a very small agency," said Domino. "In fact, we have yet to made our first year as the business. If I enjoyed that the model is going to do good and perhaps stay beyond three months, I help him or her get the necessary papers."

The youngest model to join Domino's stable of lookers was 16. But before she allowed the minor to work, Domino secured a parental consent form signed by the girl's parents and based on law by the model's mother agency.

"My models pay taxes, too, since they're automatically deducted from their income," Flores added.

Agencies like F Models usually advance all expenses, including plane fare, work permits and visas, accommodations, which the model, in turn, settles before he or she leaves the country—granted that the model makes enough money.

"It can be a lucrative business once you get the right models, but it's not without its risks," said Flores.

Since both agencies don't have enough funds to send scouts abroad (another downside was Flores has gone to Brazil, they rely on their partners' recommendations). Thanks to the Internet, they're rarely able to get an idea of how a certain model looks.

Of course, since they'll soon be dealing with real people made of flesh and blood, the Internet is a poor substitute to face-to-face encounters. Except for a few disappointments...usually attitude problems on the part of some models—their faces ran for the "Star Asian" look has yet to hit them.

"They're fun to do anything that's not daring, but then again, as long as it doesn't affect their jobs or put their lives in danger," said Domino. "But I always remind them to follow house rules and be responsible for their actions."

A number of these models, especially those coming from Brazil, are products of broken homes. Most of them know why they're here, said Flores, and it's not as party-crazy singles. In fact, they're out there and money to their families.

"Some are modeling as an extra, expecting a life of poverty in their respective countries," said Domino.

Trade secret

Flores, who sees like a big shoot to her models, let us in on a trade secret. Before she even thinks of sending them to go-sees and casting calls to impress prospective clients, she first engages her models in basic conversations to find out if their facility to speak English is often quite limited.

"In the absence of their real families, I want to make them feel that the agency is their family," she said. "I ask them what their primary reasons are for coming to the Philippines. I also try to impress upon them that the agency is very interested in the fulfillment of their dreams."

It doesn't matter what their goals are, but as soon as a particular model misbehaves, or is not performing up to par, Flores and the rest the rest of their bookers to work some arms into that person's head. It always works.

Both women are aware of how the development is affecting the livelihoods of not a few local models. If she only has a choice, Domino said she would much rather stick to developing local talents. She only is her agency spared from the risks of flying in an insecure country, she doesn't have to subject herself to all the trouble of getting the said that permit.

"Most of our local models are beautiful," she said. "But the market is always looking for new faces. We're just giving clients what they want."

Flores is more proactive in dealing with the situation. After all, she also manages the careers of such A-list Filipina models as Ria Bolivar, Melissa Ryp, Carla Adarado, Jake Ejercito and a few others.

"We try to strike a balance," she said. "That's why for the past two years, we've been sending locals in 'sister' buildings in Singapore and Malaysia for two to three months. The exposure is good for them."

As a whole, Filipino models tend to take their bodies for granted, Flores observed. At the risk of sounding like a broken record, she never tires of reminding her local models to take care of themselves physically. She also encourages them to take selling lessons if they are to excel in repeat customers.

Filipinos have got what it takes to conquer the world, she said. She didn't have to go far to prove her point. Her very own agency has been instrumental in detailing several juicy contracts in the US for cult and dusky Sharina Martinez, a Philippine-born model now based in New York.

If her star continues to shine, Martinez will soon join the ranks of Filipina models such as Anne Brady, Michele Marquez, Myrza Ebeid, Anne Lloren, Becky Salumbides and more recently Chary Bautista, who have done well in the international scene.

And to think Gerona is not even what industry insiders in the Philippines would describe as "mixed" or Pan-Asian. In today's world without borders, it's not so much the model's look that counts, but being in the right place at the right time.

T MODELS' models of fit and fabulous foreign mannequins

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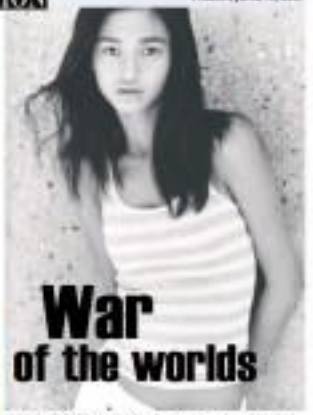

War of the worlds

PHILIPPINE-BORN Sharina Quintervos would never pass off as Pure Asian, yet the dusky model has clinched several juicy deals in New York, proving that there's a demand for Filipino models out there.

By Alex T. Vergara

Kim Santos

AS RECENT AS four years ago, foreign models from Latin America were virtually unheard of in Manila, and local mannequins dominated the runway as well as print and TV commercials. Those happy, seemingly carefree days are now history.

"During our time, fly-in models were few and far between. We had our fair share of commercial and print work, and did all the fashion shows," recalled a semi-retired model, who requested not to be identified.

Indeed, you don't have to search exclusive fashion shows staged by hip RTW labels to see how the equation has drastically changed. If anything, the Spanish-speaking beauties are more palpable in the lucrative world of advertising.

These days, except for ad campaigns featuring local celebrities, a growing number of billboards, print ads and TV commercials (TVCs in advertising parlance) on fashion, beauty, fitness and lifestyle feature striking but unknown faces that aren't quite Filipino but don't look Caucasian either.

Dancers are, these sometimes indeed are either Latin Americans (most likely Brazilians or Argentinians) or Eastern Europeans.

Apart from being in demand by companies in search of fresh faces, these foreigners are being hired to use shamelessly instead of mouth.

Successful companions, who were keen enough to be the first to venture in a strange and faraway land called the Philippines, apparently spread the word of how easy it was to clinch coveted gig dodo here.

If this development got any crazier, it won't come as a surprise if we see attractive Brazilians peddling laundry soap and instant noodles on TV and along bikini-ata days soon.

Like Rosa Samson, president of the Professional Models Association of the Philippines, the ex-sex entertainment-dancers the development as a sign of the times.

For all the ill effects it has or has generated, she said, the development could take positive a "healthy" form of competition by keeping locals on their toes.

"The world is getting smaller, so globalization is inevitable," she reasoned. "However, we do need to have certain rules and regulations to make sure the industry has a more level playing field for all concerned."

Again, like Samson, she raised the question of whether or not these foreigners, who usually stay in Manila for as short as three months before packing their bags and flying to other Asian cities, pay the proper taxes and work permits.

Samson cited a supposed law

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A STAR-AS-COLLABORATIONS go, the upcoming partnership between the Professional Models Association of the Philippines (PMAP) and Samsung may be one of the biggest ever to local fashion this 2007.

APPLES' PICKINGS

Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

In celebration of PMAP's 30th year, Samsung is working with top designer Jackie C. Aquino and the association, led by current president Rissa Santarni, to stage a major fashion event entitled "Samsung Celebrates 28 Years of PMAP" on September 5 at the Rajadoit Hall room of The Peninsula Manila.

The PMAP is an organization/union (no, it is not an agency!) of professional models, run by models, who all have the confidence, talent and ability to manage their own careers. The first of its kind around the globe, its main objectives are to "uplift, promote and professionalize the modelling industry in the Philippines, and to develop and mobilize, national and international exposures, participation, involvement and competition in the field of modeling."

Co-founded in Alabang 1997 by then top models Bernie Antolin, Tina Mabulo-Grampa, Tara Saavedra-Ortiz, Irra Gonzales-Ngata, Sesame Chi-Sia, Robert David, Jan Garcia, Jil and Desiree Abrasaldo, to name a few, the PMAP was established as a response to less than ideal working conditions for local mannequins. The six founders fought for enviable working hours and standardized salaries for bookings, most especially for fashion shows.

The PMAP has become a major force in the development of the local modelling industry proving that models can and must work together for their own protection and progress. Innovating members of the association continue to work on improving those standards while seeking the professional services of legal and financial consultants.

PMAP has reigned supreme as pulse throughout its 20 year existence. In 1988, the association produced "PMAP and Friends," an event that brought together all sectors of the fashion in-

MODELS

Graphic elements

White Chicana collared suit, white long sleeved shirt, and black trousers, all by Ralph Lauren. White shoes, model's own; Samsung Smartphone i600

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Black to basics
Black long sleeved shirt and black trousers by Raja Laurel, Samsung Smartphone G600

Models, Inc.

From page D1

...many—from designers, photographers, stylists and the like. In 1990, PMAP co-founder Lourdes Reyes threw called "Mabuhay, Sari-Sari," organizers took the Sari-Sari Store and Dhil Masters, Inc.

For its 30th anniversary, PMAP produced Raja Laurel's first ever gala at the CCP ballroom. To celebrate its 12th anniversary, PMAP staged yet another event at the Grand Ballroom of the Manila Pavilion, Manila.

Top designers

And now, in celebration of 20 successful years in the industry, PMAP together with Samsung, a once-a-year homecoming for talents of its members and past members, as well as industry insiders who've been a rich part of the association's long history, to stage another gala event.

Some of Manila's top designers will be partnering in this much-awaited affair for to present especially designed capsule collections are Apego Cordero, Frederick Aurea, Avel Bacudio, Bernice Ramos Dias, Rino Fida, Jojo Tan Gan, Antonio Garcia, Marsden Ignacio, Gary Ingram, Ivan Jacob, Jojo Jacob, Dennis Lustico, Tristic Nicolas, Randy Ortiz, Frederick Piraba, Renee Salud, Inday Santos and Ilen Soto.

Their creations will be worn not just by the current crop of models but by past members of the association as well.

Despite the numerous challenges, not to mention controversies models, the PMAP has taken throughout these 20 years, the organization has survived with an even stronger resolve to protect and promote the interests of its members.

Congratulations to all past and present members of PMAP! Here's to another 20 years of camaraderie and collaborations!

Email the author at ajdelmundo@yahoo.com.ph

To celebrate 20 years of PMAP, the association is partnering with Samsung to stage a gala event on September 8

Photography Courtesy of Styling Tan Lee of PMAP Make-Up Artist Rina Pf ta-ing of NARS Using The Spring 2007 Collection Models Bobby Manongsol and Yuka in Da Lee Scenes of PMAP Shot On-Location at The Peninsula Suite of The Peninsula Manila Special thanks to Mr. Harmon Quintinitos and Mr. Joseph Arias

Cecile as Leia
Beige tube dress by Raja Laurel, Samsung Smartphone G600

Black magic
Black suede, velvet long sleeved shirt, sleeveless and black trousers, all by Anthony Nocum, Samsung Smartphone G600

"Tote" of the day

STILL IN SEARCH OF THAT PERFECT all-around tote-or-weekender bag? Check out Rolex Mendiri's latest offerings of practical, stylish-to-the-nth-degree bags that come in a variety of eye-popping color combinations.

The Rolex Mendiri Carry-all Tote is made of polyolefin, water-repellant canvas that makes it perfect for trips to the beach, and for rainy days, too! The bag's convenient features include open pockets for easy storage and access. It even has a little pocket-ette that hooks into the D-ring sewn into the lining of the bag.

The Rolex Mendiri Weekender Bag, on the other hand, is functional, flight-ready in a rugby-ball-shaped carry-on bag. Large and just an awesome size for any road trip to spacious interior has roomy generous pockets and a zippered compartment that can instantly organize getaway essentials.

And the hidden shoe compartment accessible on the outer side of the bag is a secret design, eliminating the need for shoe bags.

To order, call or see Rolex Mendiri at 0917-4141234 or e-mail [illegible]

FYSHION BUZZ
Hot, haute, hot news!

Show Dad how special he is by taking him to the Shang this June! The events, exhibits and values will surely make him happy.

Father's Day Promo!
Mouth-watering discounts and treat offers June 15 - 24 at Specialty Stores and Food & Beverage outlets.

Not Just for the Big Boys 2 Car Exhibit
Drool over these nice toys for the big boys from June 14 - 17

Nice Miss Matter Photo Exhibit!
Find out the men who matter the most from June 14 - 20.

Father's Day Special Presentation!
Drowse to the music of the AREA 1 band on June 16, 7 pm at the Grand Atrium, Level 2.

Streetscape Gigs!
Thank God it's Friday! Unwind with DRESS DOWN FRIDAY on June 15 and NTHING on June 29 at 10 pm.

Shangri-La Plaza

Race to the finish

Where does the soul of Manila lie? At a landmark, a building, or a place? Or is it with a person? Ten passionate teams recently signed up for the Nokia N95 Soul of Manila Wireless Adventure that took them around Manila in the quest to discover the soul of the city using the Nokia N95.

The Nokia N95 is a power and feature-packed mobile device that takes mobility into a totally new ballpark. Tagged as a multimedia computer, the Nokia N95 comes equipped with all that you'll ever need – the definition of optimal performance, a 5 megapixel camera with Carl Zeiss optics that shoots DVD quality videos, astronomic player that allows you to listen to your favorite music tracks in a range of formats such as mp3 and aac. You can also access emails, surf the internet, download movies, upload photos to Flickr, and find your way around town using the GPS feature.

Each participant had a Nokia N95 and was required to complete several fun tasks for two days. The tasks of this digital adventure were designed to show off the awesome features of the Nokia N95. Some of these tasks included: shooting a video of Manila's ultimate cuisine trailblazer, Margarita Forés, at Cafe Ilustrado in Gravelbelt 3 who gave a cooking lesson for a secret recipe; heading to Vintage Pop in Cubao Exchange to meet design and style setter Miguel Rosales, who judged the teams who were able to creatively put together items from the latest Vintage Pop catalogue, taking a photograph of it and printing this photo seamlessly; shooting a video of Makati's nightlife which was later judged by noted TV broadcast director Lito Cayetano; recording a song of music guru Rico Blanco's choice and transferring the mp3 format from a PC to the Nokia N95; and using the GPS and location maps feature and taking photographs of places and landmarks in the Quiapo area that were assisted by tour guide tour de force Carlos Celdran; and lastly, shooting a documentary-type video of the final stops of our national hero, Jose Rizal, in Fort Santiago, Manila.

The teams who participated were a merry and competitive mix of personalities, consumers, and members from the media: Digital Tour's Mario Sandejas, Michelle Agana, Jay Servo of Capital's, Jennifer Jose, Sunny man Tin Tiong, Philippine Star's Kathy Moran, Jaime Dizon of Fully Booked, Jove Chua, Maxim's Heriberto Fernandez, Manila Bulletin's Carlo Santos-Felipe, Brandfest host Patty Laurel, Stephen Ang, Cat Juan, Ed Capulong, bag designer Arnina Aramao-Alonzo, Philippine Daily Inquirer's Pam Pastor, stylist Pam Quinones, Glen Flores, Marie Claire fashion editor Rosie Cortes, and OneFilipinoMagazine's Paolo Manzano.

The contestants took pictures, shot videos, recorded music, browsed the web, utilized a GPS device, saved and sent information, and uploaded data using their Nokia N95 to complete their tasks.

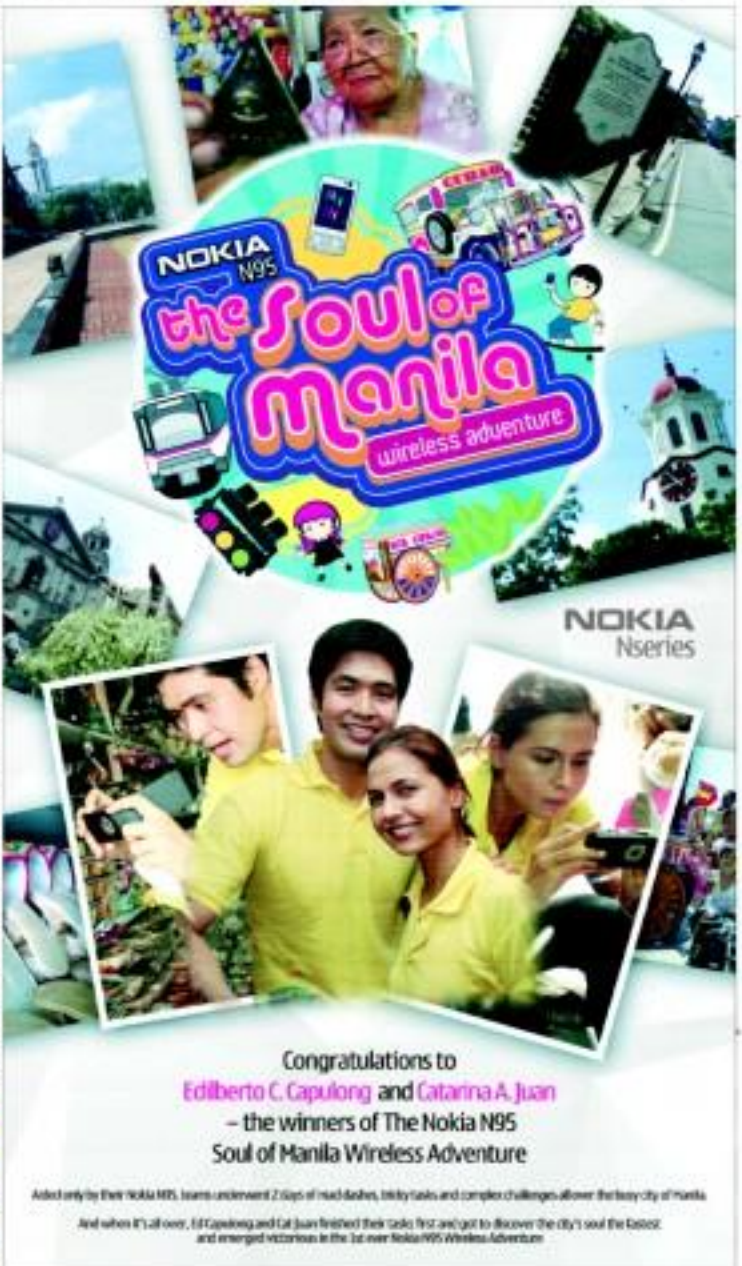
And after 2 days of racing all over the city to complete complex challenges and wacky tasks, 3 teams emerged victorious. Edilberto C. Capulong and Catarina A. Juan topped 9 other teams by finishing all their tasks in the fastest time and with the highest number of points.

The winners were announced on the culminating event held last Wednesday, May 30 at the Ayala Museum in Makati.

Attending the event were the winners, Ed and Cat, the contestants and marshals, and key people from Nokia like Sandeep Khanna, Grace Del Callar and William Hamilton-Wilyn. The fun-filled party was also graced by different celebrities and personalities, plus other invited guests.

The grand prize was given to Ed Capulong and Cat Juan in a special awarding ceremony. They each received P50,000 in cash and an Annapolis vacation.

2 days of fun and adventure-filled racing all over the metro. 2 winners who ultimately discovered the soul of Manila. 1 multimedia computer that made it all possible – the Nokia N95.



Congratulations to
Edilberto C. Capulong and Catarina A. Juan
– the winners of The Nokia N95
Soul of Manila Wireless Adventure

Aided only by their Nokia N95, teams underwent 2 days of road dashes, tricky tasks and complex challenges all over the busy city of Manila.

And when it's all over, Ed Capulong and Cat Juan finished their tasks first and got to discover the city's soul the fastest and emerged victorious in the 1st ever Nokia N95 Wireless Adventure

LIFESTYLE

FASHION

Mini-me
Chi Moghher Lubiano, with sons Sebastian and Fritzie, in a striped hand-woven silk barong with mother-of-pearl and silk embroidery

Father's day finery

By Bianca Camaisa
Contributor

Fashion brand Silk Cocoon unveils a new collection of clothes designed especially for the busy breadwinner

FOR MANY BUSY FATHERS, fashion is always an afterthought.

After a long day at work, they head home, change into the first casual shirt they find in the cabinet, and settle down to enjoy some quality time with their family.

Sometimes, on weekends, they change into those polo shirts and khakis for a trip to the theme park, or an afternoon at the movies.

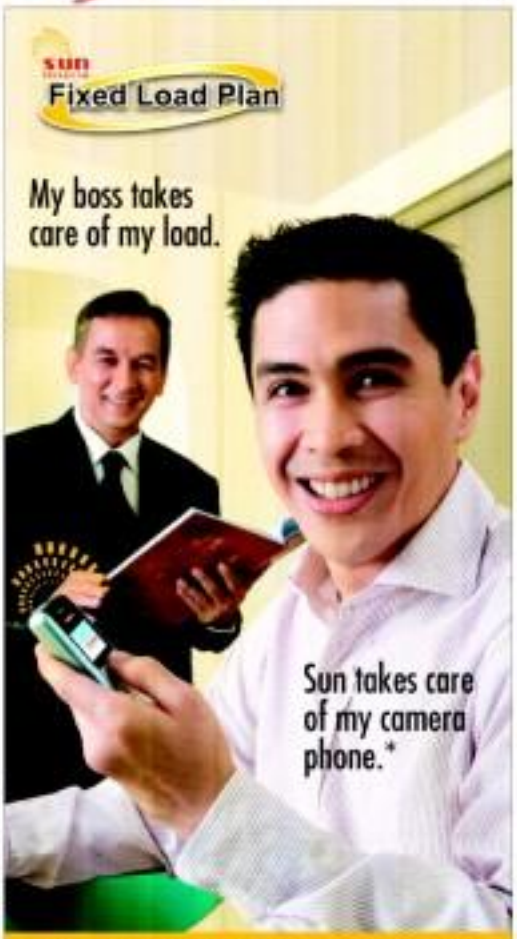
Very rarely do fathers get a chance to express themselves, stylish-wise, because of the demands of work and family life.

However, the people behind fashion brand Silk Cocoon, designer Rosvida Chay, came out with a new collection of clothes designed especially for the busy breadwinner.

Simple items such as silk shirts and linen barongs are given a twist, thanks to details such as ethnic beads, mother-of-pearl squares, Aztec-inspired embroidery and striped accents. Bright, juicy colors such as aqua, yellow and green also give life to the collection.

Thirty-six-year-old entrepreneur Leni Araneta, for instance, prefers comfortable clothes as he can spend time with his kids be-

INTERIORS E2



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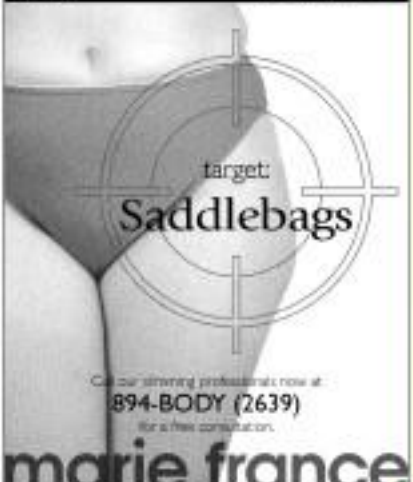

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Proud pop
Christopher Lejeune in a biker jacket can see Jayden with an eye on embroidery detail

Father knows best
Leon Ai wants to accessorise shirt with embroidery detail

Daddy cool
Lim Guowei in prime embroidered silk shirt

Father's day finery

From page E1

hair and often wont. Father to a baby girl, Antonius says he's a hands-on dad. "I can't do everything, but I do as much as I can. I change diapers, I read stories, and I bond lots. I want my daughter to really feel my presence as she grows up."

Christopher Lejeune, 42, agrees. Dishes to two boys, he believes that it is important for parents to be around for their children. "We do everything with them," Lejeune says. "We usually eat together, watch a lot of things that they do. We help them with their homework and take them to school."

Lejeune, in particular, enjoys playing soccer and frequent trips to the beach with his boys. "Whenever we can, we take them out and bond. That way, we'll know more about them, and they'll feel comfortable growing up."

Travelling is also important to 37-year-old Lim Guowei, corporate communications and marketing director of automobile giant BMW and father of three children.

"We travel a lot. I'm pretty busy, but I make sure that it's quality — and not quantity — time that counts. We really plan our our activities."

For example, Disneyland is no fun for a parent, Lim first says. "But we use the joy on the kids' faces to motivate ourselves and have fun at the various characters."

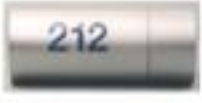
Antonius, who usually wears suits six days a week, looks forward to Sundays when he can relax with his kids in jeans, sneakers and shirts. However, outfit folk Lim can't stand lounge, for we longer for as soon until he's dressed down at the end of the week to feel comfortable in his clothes.

Like father, like sons
Lim Guowei, in a turquoise linen shirt with colour squares, strikes a pose with sons Sam and Gio.

Photography Patrick Morales
Styling editor Bianca Cavanagh
Grooming Tein Yang using Make Up For Ever cosmetics
All clothes Gio Couture.
Shot at the BMW showroom in Makati and Lim's Spanish bank-inspired Garman

Scents for Dad

EVERYONE LOVES A GOOD fragrance and daddies are definitely no exception. Splurging on a good scents is a perfect moral lifter. Stripped of their many protective layers, daddies, after all, can just as "scent-sational" as you and me.



212 Men

212 Men reveals a masculine fragrance that is different, surprising, and exceptionally attractive. It is made for men who are unapologetically metropolitan, urban, successful and stylish.

A woody interpenetrated musk, the fragrance has body top notes of Grapefruit, cut grass, and Spice leaves, spicy floral middle notes from Lemon pepper, Ginger, and Gardenia petals, and a woody musk base of Sandalwood, Incense and White musk.

Available in 100 ml (P3,850) and 50 ml (P2,750) at leading department stores nationwide. 212 Men by Carolina Herrera is exclusively distributed by Ramon Marketing Corporation.

Escada Sentiment Pour Homme

Escada Sentiment Pour Homme is a timeless sexy grooming fragrance for the modern, elegant man. Inside the bottle shaped bottle is a sweet, spicy and woody combination of exotic notes. Fragrant spices and sensual wood.

Available in 100 ml (P4,350), 50 ml (P3,150) and 30 ml (P2,150) at leading department stores nationwide. Escada Sentiment Pour Homme is exclusively distributed by Ramon Marketing Corporation.

Herrera Aqua

Carolina Herrera introduces Herrera Aqua, a new fragrance for men inspired by nature. Herrera Aqua is an Eau de Toilette that combines freshness, elegance, and sensuality. The fragrance combines the citrus notes freshness of fresh Bergamot, Mandarin zest, Fig and Artichoke leaves with fresh spicy aromatic nuances from Neroli, French Lavender, Rosemary, Cardamom, and Yellow pepper, and the tempering character of woody Ambra musk notes from Haitian, Tonka beans, amber, and smooth skin musk.

Available in 100 ml (P5,000), 50 ml (P3,500) at leading department stores nationwide. Escada Sentiment Pour Homme is exclusively distributed by Ramon Marketing Corporation.

Boss Selection

If you're a man who wants to leave an indelible mark or impression on the people you meet, then the new Boss Selection will suit you perfectly. It's a fragrance that speaks of success, sophistication and elegance.

Its sensual scent is highlighted by top notes of grapefruit and mandarin combined with spicy fresh peppermint, with a solid base of cedar leaf, cedar wood, patchouli, vetiver and musk.

A Boss Selection man is an achiever, someone who takes pride in who he is and what he does. Actor Thomas Jane for instance, who made an impression with his brief role as a conspicuously Germ general in "The Punisher," is the face of Boss Selection.

Boss Selection is available at all leading department stores nationwide and is exclusively distributed by Ramon Marketing Corporation (90-ml spray P4,450, 50-ml spray P3,450).

BlackXS by Paco Rabanne

BlackXS by Paco Rabanne is a unique fragrance that plays on contrasts, with incisive notes and modern harmonies.

BlackXS is inspired by rock 'n roll, a world ruled by rebels with gentle spirits. The scent is sandalwood and cantaloupe. Exclusively distributed by Ramon Marketing Corporation at leading department stores nationwide (100-ml spray, P3,650; 50-ml spray, P2,800).

Fresh Attitude by Givenchy

The successful franchise of Very Irresistible Givenchy introduces fresh Attitude, a new limited-edition fragrance for men embodying a masculine irresistibility in a woody fresh, sensuous scent.

With top notes of peppermint and grapefruit, the fragrance gives off a sensation of freshness, energy and dynamism. Its light blue juice and luminous bottle in gradiating shades of blue further convey the fragrance's masculine freshness. Exclusively distributed by Ramon Marketing Corporation, Givenchy's Fresh Attitude is available in all leading department stores nationwide in EDT Spray 50 ml at 2,950 and EDT Spray 100 ml at 3,600.

Zoo Zest treats

The father's love must find to something special with a selection of top-quality Zoo grooms and treats products. David Isaac IV, Zoo Zest, the Philippines' premier cosmetic body and bath line, offers first-class products in special discounted prices grooms.

Need to put a smile on Dad's face.

Grab cosmetician will surely do the trick, which consist of Zoo Zest men's colognes, aquaeneray, Bodyr, and Exhalus. Each brand bottle of Zoo Zest men's colognes can be P152, a 20-percent discount from the usual standard retail price of P190. Discount also pamper Dad's feet with Zoo Zest's popular foot spa, the Zoo Pedisoak with Wooden Gift Set. This great gift for Father's Day includes Lotion Exfoliant peppermint scrub, natural pumice stone, nail purity peppermint moisturizer, leaving Dad's feet truly refreshed. For Father's Day, each DIY Wooden Gift Set retails for P952.

Sole sensations

TIRED OF GIVING DAD neckties after necktie every time Father's Day rolls around? Bored with the idea of buying yet another golf club accessory set and dress shirt for dad this year? Give him a gift he will truly appreciate—a brand-new pair of shoes from America's premier luxury brand, Cole Haan.

As a special Father's Day treat, Cole Haan is giving away *sfx* Add leather picture frame for purchases of regular-priced items worth P18,000 and above, from June 11-17, making Cole Haan shoes the perfect gift for Dad on Father's Day.

Whether it's for work, casual everyday wear, dress up affairs or sporting events, Cole Haan shoes make the perfect Father's Day present. Cole Haan has got every style covered, from Oxfords to slip-ons, to open toe sandals, and even anti-fit footwear reinforced with Nike Air technology. With the Cole Haan trademark of fine craftsmanship achieved through timeless design, Cole Haan shoes are definitely every dad's dream.

These classic styles come in exquisite finishes such as soft leather and suede, burnished Italian calfskin, distressed leather, smooth leather, uneven shrunken and canvas. The shoes come in easy-to-match neutral colors such as milkshake, tan, chocolate, brandy, dark brown, French roast and black, and are finished with elegant details such as artisan stitch-out and contrast stitching.

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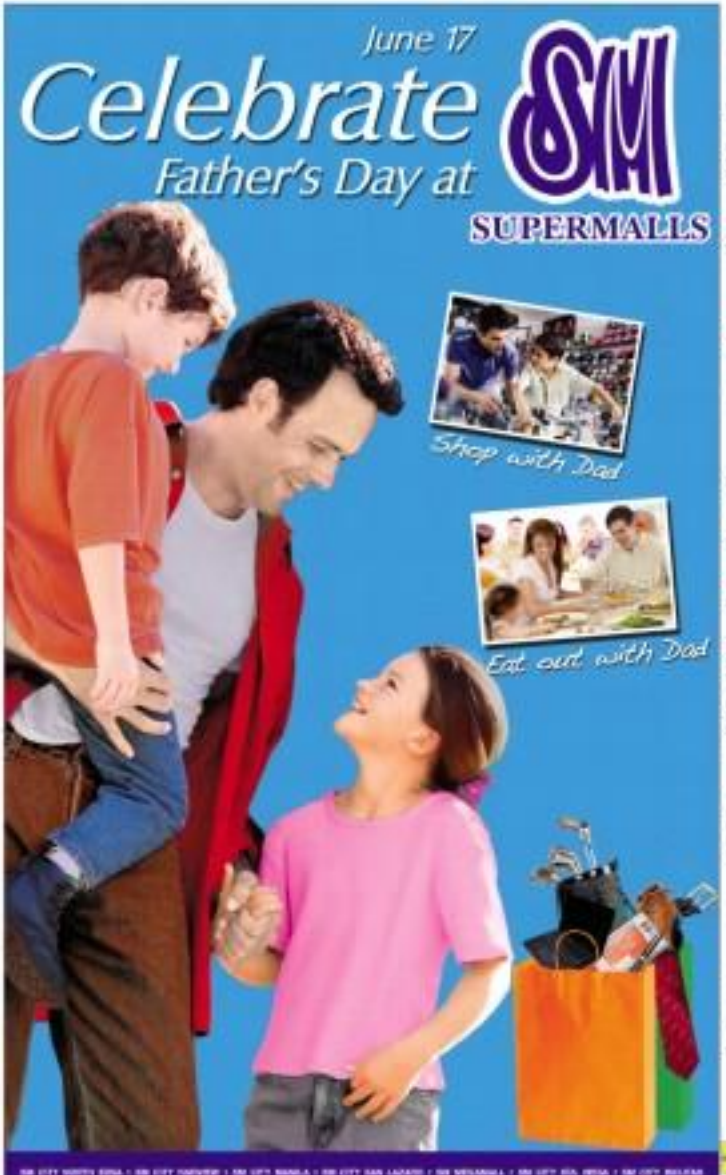

Special Moments with Dad Photo Contest
by Photolink, Picture City, Great Image & Kamerawerld

June 1 - 30
SM City North EDSA, SM City Fairview, SM City Manila, SM Supercenter Valenzuela, SM City Sta. Mesa, SM City San Lazaro, SM Megamall, SM Mall of Asia, SM Supercenter Pasig, SM City Sucat, SM City Bicutan, SM Southmall, SM City Bacoor

Dads Fashion Show and Makeover

June 15
SM City Manila, SM City Sta.mesa, SM City Fairview

June 16
SM Southmall, SM City Pampanga, SM City Cebu, SM City Iloilo, SM City Batangas, SM City Sucat, SM City Marilao, SM Supercenter Valenzuela

June 17
SM City Bicutan, SM City Lipa, SM City Bacoor, SM City Davao, SM Supercenter Molino, SM City Lucena, SM City Cagayan de Oro, SM City Sta. Rosa

Father and Child Pizza Eating-Making Contest
by Pizza Hut

June 16
SM City Marilao, SM City Lipa, SM City Bacoor, SM City Davao, SM City Cagayan de Oro

June 17
SM City Baguio, SM City Dasmarinas, SM City Cebu, SM City Iloilo, SM City Koronadal, SM City Pampanga, SM Supercenter Molino, SM City Lucena

Musical Tribute to Dads

June 16
SM City Bacoor, SM City Cagayan de Oro, SM City Davao

June 17
SM City Cebu, SM City Iloilo

Father & Child Singing Contests and Talent Shows

June 15
SM City Lipa, SM City Batangas

June 17
SM City Cagayan de Oro, SM City Baguio

RC Car Racing
by Tamiya c/o Lil's Hobby Shop

SM Megamall (June 16), SM Mall of Asia (June 17), SM Southmall (June 23), SM City Sucat (June 30)

PLDT Library Laug Kay Itay
SM City Sta. Mesa (June 15), SM City Bacoor (June 16), SM Southmall (June 17)

Level-Up! Gaming with Dad
SM City Sta. Mesa (June 15), SM City Bacoor (June 16), SM Southmall (June 17)

Concerts and Mall Tours
SM City Clark (Jonno Gibbs - June 16), SM Supercenter Valenzuela (Mark Bautista - June 17), SM City Lipa (Rachelle Ann Go, back-to-back with Jimmy Marquez - June 17), SM City Batangas (The Dawn - June 17), SM City Sta. Rosa (Jed Madela - June 17), SM City Dasmarinas (Journey - June 17)

Ace Hardware Gadgets and Tools Fair
SM City Bicutan (June 15), SM Supercenter Valenzuela (June 15), SM City Manila (June 15-17), SM City Sucat (June 16-17), SM City Fairview (June 17), SM Megamall (June 17)

Other Events
SM City Clark
Yellow and Wild Endurance Challenge (June 15-17)
Dad's Big Weekend (June 15-17)
Dance Xtreme Competition! (June 16-17)
SM Supercenter Molino
Singing Daddy Hotwire Challenge (June 16)
SM City Dasmarinas
Singing Daddy Hotwire Challenge (June 17)
SM City Marilao
Father & Child Grand Slam Shootout (June 17)
SM City Lucena
Dad's Cups : Techno Fish and Living Gallery (June 15-17)
FIC "Regalo 2 Go" (June 16)
Awesome Superdads (June 17)
SM City Sta. Rosa
Mobile Fun Day with Dad (June 17)

SM CITY NORTH EDSA • SM CITY FAIRVIEW • SM CITY MANILA • SM CITY SAN LAZARO • SM MEGAMALL • SM CITY STA. MESA • SM CITY BICUTAN
SM CITY SUCAT • SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO • SM SOUTHMALL • SM CITY DASMARINAS • SM CITY BATANGAS • SM CITY MARILAO • SM CITY PAMPANGA
SM CITY BAGUIO • SM CITY LUCENA • SM SUPERCENTER PASIG • SM CITY ILOILO • SM CITY DAVAO • SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO • SM CITY CEBU
SM SUPERCENTER VALENZUELA • SM CITY STA. ROSA • SM CITY LIPA • SM CITY CLARK • SM CITY SAN JOSE • SM CITY BACOOR • SM MALL OF ASIA

LIFESTYLE

Phnom Penh: From war to chic-ness

LIFE-STYLED
Thelma Sioson San Juan

Noted Cambodian designer to launch collection in Manila

IS THE ONLY one left. My whole family killed, my sisters and parents," the hotel driver said as we came up the driveway of Raffles Hotel Le Royal in Phnom Penh.

It was an odd way to break the ice, but

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BICUTAN • CUCINA • BAGUIO • MARILAO • DASMARIÑAS • BATANGAS • DELGADO • SAN LAZARO • DUCAT • STA. ROSA • CLARK • MALL OF ASIA • LIPA • BACOLOD

SWIMSUIT Bayanihan finds a perfect pair in Shockers homeboy duo.

"MAZZIVE" DJ Mossman

SKETCHERS Street Style 2006 winner Jerica Reyes

MODEL Carl San Pedro

MBA Lyqbanco kiss for entire Bandana members.

BRAZILIAN model Jefferson Duarte

SULTRY model Ka Barcenas

These shoes are made for walking in style

LILA Alvarez

MYRNA Fernandez, Vanessa Tantoban and AC Ocampo

ARNEL Pupo and Ana Rocha

LISA Korte and Gaby Feres

JOSEPHINE Kroes and Fortunato Lobrusto

EYE-CATCHING sandwarbabes Luciano Gil, Tina Lucero, Pinky Moore, Anna and Phoebe Chan

MACOLOD'S model Edmund Garcia

ALVARO del Rosario

FAITE Elorde

SHOES AND WATCHES are irresistible to me, darlings, so, without batting an eyelash, was dazzled to the capsizing of one of the hottest brands in town, Shoe-ers, palengke.

Globe youth icon Shockers opened its first ever concept store in level M2 of Trinoma, the super regional shopping center on North Avenue in Quezon City, palengke.

In the interest (get these, lovelies) of business, entertainment and fashion, were already there for the grand opening, palengke.

Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Aurora Lim did the ribbon-snipping with Apple Mobb Entertainment and Mindy Sotto. Shockers' mega branches, and popular singer and Shockers girl Rachel Ann Go.

Beauty queens Gina Ramos and Mutya Ocampo-Robinson were happy to find their fave shoe store moved to its classy collection from Ilocos, a favorite of hot Hollywood celebrities.

"Here, you don't have to go to LA to have the latest shoes that Hollywood's stylish set is wearing," said Gina R.

After the ribbon-cutting, Rachel Ann sang, MYMP played their hits, and Francis S. of Xavier High School and Stevedanore Club of the University of the Philippines Ilocanos showed off the awesome street-dancing skills that made them contenders of Shockers' Streetdancer Battle 2, palengke.

Check out Shockers, palengke!

Sneak peek

Mia Almeda, the talented granddaughter of the founder of the famous Ilonga Shoes, is one of Cebu's highly respected designers in the Philippine fashion industry. She designs bags and shoes and exports them to several countries abroad, palengke.

Actress Ina Feleo, the Gemstock 3 lobby girl, is a patroness of Mia's shoes. But we ought to look out for when the brand-new boutique of Lila A. opens in midcommonly with the grand opening of December 1.

It is interesting to note, palengke, that Lila's inspiration behind her designs is the customers. "I really look into the changing lifestyles of the Filipino shopper. That is why I craft some my collection to either more 'Filipino' or more 'Western' to cater to the needs of my customers," she told us.

Lila's shoes sell for P2,500-P5,000. That's a bargain, palengke, for designer pieces.

Wenah artist Mabee Ingle is entertained as concert-goers around looking at Lila's beautiful collection, palengke.

"With the new destination at the Ayala Malls, Alabang, Trinoma is now the center of fashion in the country where all the latest trends are found, making Cavaleri 5 and Filipino designers at par with the best of the world," said Ayala Center CEO Myrna Fernandez.

Blast from the past

It was flashback time, palengke, time to remember those grand, elegant Kalayaan balls of Hagonoy-esque heroes and heroines.

This fabulous tradition was resurrected during the Weekend fete fair in Bonifacio City in a colorful revival called "Maghinguyo Kita." It had all the trimmings of past gorgeous Kalayaan balls, palengke, as it gathered the cream of Bonifacio society, dazzling in their finest jewelry, tuxedos and bare-ness — mines, ostrich boas, the "ultimate" dress evolved.

Their Majesties, palengke, the true blue and style of this cultural tradition was asked, all for the benefit of the Ilonga Museum and Hagonoy Devotional Band Orchestra, two very important charity causes.

Popular Hagonoy-born mayor Gov. Joseph G. Hamosa led the opening ceremonies by striking three gong-signaling strokes on a decorative native bell, the Serial Bell of the Gallant Province of Cagayo. Ms. Character himself, Jose Mari Chan, and classy Lyn Gamboa, gorgeous chair and president of MCE respectively, welcomed everyone to an awesome magical night hosted by Audrey Qua-Ballesteros.

There was a short fashion show with some of the prettiest young women of Bonifacio parading to follow up inspired gowns created by some of the country's top designers, natives, darlings.

The grand highlight of the shindig (there also happening was the fabulous concert by the following: crooning, entertainer, Philippine Peacemaker, violinist Alessandro Simonetti that turned him into standing ovations.

The Kalayaan finalists, led by talented Gilbert Kalayaan and wife Constance Pineda, gave a stellar performance. Art exhibits were held in various galleries during the National

BELGIAN lensman Pivot-Reinhard and Physician Chris Cahilig

BEAUTY queen Lian Ramos-Galang actor and commercial model Boots Ledesma

Ana Feo, palengke.

Francophone

During the International Day of the Francophony, palengke, 200 million French speakers in the world celebrated their common language and commemorated the establishment of the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) in 1970 in Niamey, Niger.

"The OIF is an international organization of countries and governments where French is spoken. It is another important forum for discussions of worldwide cultural and linguistic diversity, with headquarters located in Paris," explained our vice chairwoman Camille Lacson, top expert of the French Embassy, palengke.

Alliance Française de Manille, together with the embassies of France, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Egypt, Lebanon and Switzerland, held Ou Et Quand des Poètes, the annual poetry event, theme of this year's Francophonie was "Lettres Assoiffées," it called on poets to sing love in different languages.

Some poets included Diamond Astor De Leon's entry "Virgilio Almario (Ako Ito Alam), Mapalad Mendoza, Ricky Vasco and the two absentee French ambassador Jacques Chomel who worked their magic by French poet Pierre Corneille about an old man courting a young lady that he might lead applause from the packed festival invitees, palengke.

Vive la lengua Francaise, merci beaucoup.

ALLSTREAM Commercial Contractor Walter Mathwich IV and actor Ortigas III and Bernard Reguindin Palero

BELGIAN Ambassador Gregoire Vanhaelst, Camille Vincent, Walter Mathwich and son, Ecole Francaise de Manille principal Mireille Vincent, and Jacques Jeannerot

BELLES of Bacolod at "Pilipinas Kay Ganda Kalayaan Night": Miss Villanueva, Mara Perdo de Torres, Lyn Gamboa and Rose Tapia-Horn

ALICE Ian Jose, Wifey Trinidad and Jose Hungana

NING Chomel, French Miss Alice Ian Carvalho Jose, Martine Varnoux and France Ambassador Gerard Chomel

Noted Cambodian . . .

From page F1

what initially comes to mind among first-time visitors to Cambodia, like we were, is "The Killing Fields"—the movie and the recent history of this Southeast Asian neighbor. We related the horror of the communist Khmer Rouge civil war in the '70s and the ignominious Pol Pot regime which saw about three million people killed.

He was 13 years old then, he said. He would later learn that his then-unlucky countrymen were residents of Phnom Penh. People his family to the genocidal regime that wiped out a quarter of the population, mostly of the educated class.

Sir Cambodia today is not a sad place, for sure is. While it is not as bustling as Hong Kong—but yet—it is approaching an economic boom. Former Budget Secretary Ben Diokno, whom we ran into in the Raffles (he was in Cambodia on a consulting job), said Cambodia is the fastest growing economy in the region.

"On the fun trade" is how World Bank describes the Cambodian economy. Backed on it by garment exports, tourism and agricultural production, he garment industry a opposite me serving the China onslaught.

This brings us to why we were in Phnom Penh in the first place—to look into the fashion collection of "Born to Fashion" Cambodian designer Sunpalin Keth. (Afew Cambodian designers are making inroads in New York.) Apart from her beautiful architecture in Phnom Penh, Keth already has some called before in Tokyo, Shanghai, London, Paris, the Chi Minh and to a high-end resort in Africa.

Keth's atelier is a leafy neighborhood in Phnom Penh is a lovely two-story colonial house she rented into a showroom. The breeze of Phnom Penh is that, like Ho Chi Minh, it has a few houses and government buildings that survive from the colonial era, both old and new. They're like isolated pieces of old Europe transported to the here and now, co-existing—although not fully blending—with aging shophouses, new fancy buildings with bright blue glass windows portraying hybrid architecture, and well-paved, roads. Phnom Penh has a better road network than Metro Manila! But have equal numbers of motorbikes and cars.

On a hot summer day, Phnom Penh neighborhoods can be pretty laidback. It was as they called it cooler. But that's relative, as a wife said *another after growing up in Paris.*

Born to diplomat parents (her mother is Cambodia's ambassador to Beijing and her father **is the ambassador to Unesco**), she and her family left Cambodia when she was only seven. After years in Paris, they moved back to the early '70s. There she went to the Paris School of Fine Arts and, later, to the famed School of Fashion Design.

After only two years at Esmod, she accepted a designing job at Macy's. Not long after this, she began showing her own collections in a small boutique in Paris and developing a good clientele, including actress Carole Bouquet, the former wife of French actor Gerard Depardieu.

In 1994, her husband, a biologist, prodded her country to and live in Cambodia. The couple and their four children (now aged 18 to 5) resettled in Phnom Penh where Keth took some time to adjust. She continued exporting her clothes to her Paris clientele, but before long, she discovered the native home industries of embroidery and silk weaving. Cambodian silk and embroidery then become the defining elements of her design.

Keth's designs are chic, as chic as her stores. They're not costumes. They're contemporary, and a few, such as her sateen coats with fabric strip borders, offer cutting-edge designs. It's obvious she speaks through fabrics and colors, the way she does in her shop.

Tantalizing colors

Her atelier has graceful enough iron wrydown, a floral chairway, and rooms in colors that are so bold they put you in various moods as you move from one to the other. Her colors stimulate, like spices. For instance, her black-clad bar are in a hot-hue room. On the second floor, the black and grey clothes are in a purple room. Another room is patterned in shades of purple to serve as backdrop for red-as-hot pink clothes.

Like the walls of her atelier, her clothes hot tone a stimulating palette—from blacks and grays, to purple and lilac, to reds and fuchsias and pinks. These are tantalizing colors to any woman.

Her silhouettes are trendy but wearable—lots of bubble skirts or flare, pencil skirts or shoe coats. She uses appliques lovingly and flower motifs, and prefers comfortable, judicious headwork, fabric strips.

But clear advantage over Filipino designers

JANET Adams (right) and sister Nancy in Keth's Ellie black dresses

is her access to fabrics: Cambodian silks, organzas, and Korean cotton and other fabrics blends.

She loves mixing colors and fabrics. "Today's women are so busy in their careers and with their children that they forget to be glamorous, to be women, to be pretty," Keth advises.

Her designs mini collections every week—a clear indication of a growing clientele in Phnom Penh, composed mostly of expatriates and a growing middle class. This should easily close the envy of Manila designers.

Another enviable thing about Cambodian fashion is the existence of weaving villages. Our eye roamed the Mekong River by ferry boat to reach Koh Dach, a village of weavers. There we saw women hunched before their looms, weaving silk in jewel colors—fuchsia and pink to sea bream, blue to another, aqua to cobalt another.

Buttons, ribbons snapped up the fabrics and teamed to bring home those huge sateen jars (purple ranks, it turned out) if only he could.

Hiroya Gallery's Didi Bas arranged our trip on the invitation of another (co-gallery owner and businessman, Richard Adams, our friend from the Philippines Gallery owner of the '80s. Richard and his wife Janet are frequent visitors to Phnom Penh, looking into the orphanages there. It was on one of those trips that they walked into Ambre, Keth's store, and found her clothes.

Richard and Janet will open a store of Keth's collections in Makati and launch it in November this year.

Brunonn's tanzanite

Norwegian jeweler Hans Brunonn is working on the gold big gemstone collection. It was discovered in the foothills of Mt. Kilimanjaro in 1967 and introduced to the world by Tiffany's of New York. A thousand times rarer than diamonds and expected to last for only one generation, tanzanite jewelry make for true heirloom pieces.

Tanzanite's unique color—between blue and violet—is unlike that of any other gemstone. It was December birthstone.

Sir Hubert's duo Hans Brunonn has crafted a pendant in tanzanite, yellow and white gold and damaging wood with one antique shaped tanzanite of 2.79 ct.

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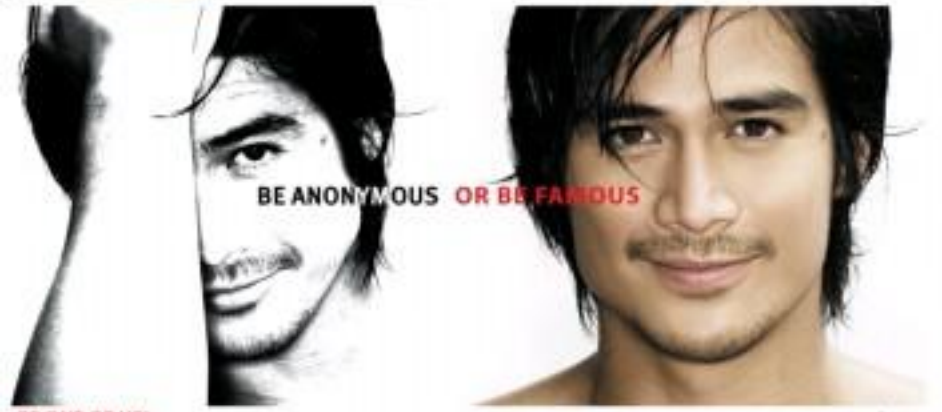

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ATOMIC AND WOODY — BY LYNN GARCELLANO

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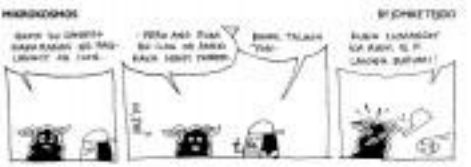
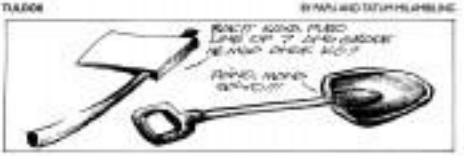
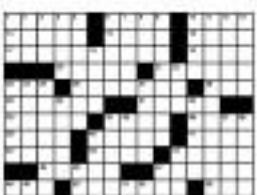


TULDOK — BY PAPU AND TATUM HILARIBILENE



SEEN — BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD



HOROSCOPE

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku — by Dave Green

	9			7			5	
	2		9		6		1	
		4			6		2	
			8		7			
		1			3		4	
	7		2		8		3	
	8			1			7	

Difficulty Level ★★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

1	5	8	6	9	3	7	2	4
9	6	7	4	5	8	3	1	
4	3	2	7	1	8	9	6	5
8	1	5	7	2	4	6	9	3
2	3	6	8	1	9	5	4	7
7	4	9	5	3	6	1	8	2
5	8	1	3	6	2	4	7	9
6	9	3	2	4	7	8	5	1
3	7	4	9	8	5	2	1	6

Difficulty Level ★★★

Filipiniana in America

THREE FASHION DESIGNERS FROM Manila will showcase their modern take on "Filipiniana" as part of the monthlong Philippine-American Friendship Celebration in New Jersey, United States.

Behind the Collezione Alta Moda, the premiere collection of José Diaz Boying Dimaguiba and Leonard Co will be presented at the Biscuit Network Art part there on June 30, 7 p.m. (US time).

The 15-piece collection of each designer will be a showcase of the finest in Filipino design and craftsmanship.

Diaz will present a modern approach to standard Filipiniana dressing with his design mantra of "less is more", while Dimaguiba does Modern Glam Filipiniana with a collection of long and sleek formals.

Co, for his part, will present a collection of richly colored and textured embroidery reminiscent of the fiery sky of National Artist for Fashion Ramon Valera. Known for his mastery of handmade patterns and hand-painted pieces, Co's Ultra Modern Filipiniana will be a truly fitting finale to the show.

Organized by the Philippine-American Friendship Committee, Inc., the show hopes to bring to Filipinos residing in the US the richness of local culture through fashion.

DESIGNERS Boying Dimaguiba, Co and Diaz

BY BOYMO Estrella

GOINGS ON

Nonstop texting this school year

AT 99¢ THE SMOOTH OF THE P25 one-day Text-and-Text Unlimited service, Sun Cellular is launching one offer that to hope local school all-all-time low. Sun TEXT Talk should inform members Sun or Sun texting for 24 hours. And since the service outpits the lowest cash outlay in town P25, being connected has never been easier and more affordable. Sun is also giving free 10 minutes' worth of Sun-to-Sun voice calls. With Sun's TEXT, students can easily communicate with their schoolmates about projects and assignments. Parents can easily check on their kids or school any time throughout the day, and the workers can text away without worry to plan the next big book fair or school party. Sun's P25 is now available through thousands of all Sun loading stations. Visit The Sun Store within your area, call 3668888, or visit www.suncellular.com.ph.

INSTANT PRIZES. Robinsons malls nationwide present "Dad's Incredible," a Fathers' Day celebration on June 17. Moms and kids must register their husband or father at the Activity Area of each mall from 10 a.m. for a chance to win instant prizes in the beauty center shows from 12 noon-4 p.m. Product demos and workshops will be conducted by Handyman Do-It-Best at Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Place Manila, Robinsons Starmills, Robinsons Place Ermita and Robinsons Place Malolos. Enjoy games while here in selected Robinsons malls. Call 6636137 or 6636139 loc. 100/103.

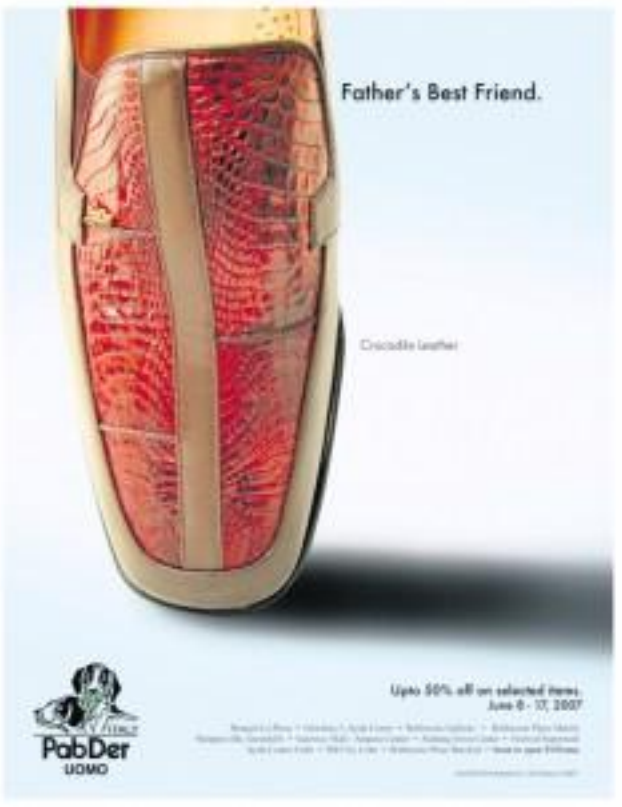
LAMAN/ATEAN ANNIVERSARY. To commemorate the fifth anniversary of the consecration of St. Pio of Pietrelcina, the Philippine Center for St. Pio of Pietrelcina, Inc., a nonstock, nonprofit organization engaged in propagating the teachings of St. Pio, will hold a eucharistic celebration on June 15, 10 a.m. and 6 p.m., at the St. Pio Chapel, UBE, Pedregosa, Jr. Boulevard (C-5), Bagumbayan, QC. Call or fax 6345888, e-mail act-ind@bandpine.edu.ph.

PHOTO CONTEST. Take endearingly, funny and spontaneous images, emotions, snapshots and join the Sony Ericsson Top Shot Photo Competition. Upload your entries on the Top Shot website www.sonyericsson.com/topshot. Deadline for submission of entries is July 31. Prizes include two round-trip tickets to Boracay and a Sony Ericsson K810i Cyber-shot phone. Visit the Sony Ericsson Cyber-shot interactive showroom from 10-12 at the atrium of the Main Mall, SM Mall of Asia, and stay 9-6 at the lower level of Glorietta 3.

FORUM. De La Salle University-Manila's College of Computer Studies holds its 4th National Multilingual Processing Research Symposium with the theme "Philippine Languages and Computation," until June 15 at the De La Salle College of St. Benilde (Call 5204402 or 5260271 to 75).

PHOTO CONTEST. The 1st Philippine Airlines Photo Contest "The Beauty of the Philippines" will be launched on June 23 at Embassy, The Fort, Global City. It is open to all amateur photographers and kids who love photography. The contest aims to promote the country's ecotourism. A series of photo clinics will be conducted from June-August to five of the country's top ecotourism. Georgia Tapiol, Bich Navarro, Eileen Loyola, Vic Sotto and Jay Sonza. Visit www.palphotocontest.com or www.philippinetopsights.net. E-mail at sen@pdcviewsonthis@gmail.com.

MOM'S DAY CELEBRATION. The Star Group of Malls celebrates Father's Day with special mentions. Shop at Pride Supermarket on June 17, or the mall holds a three-day nationwide sale. Call (7344882 and 8822512).



Mall's Father's Day treats

LET DAD KNOW HE IS NO. 1 TO YOU through special treats on Father's Day at Ayala Malls.

Manduriao Deli's Father's Day lunch or dinner buffet features, for starters, Grilled Beef Salad with bell peppers in grain mustard dressing, Japanese California Rolls with Wasabi, Tomato Bisque Soup with crab wontons.

Entrées include Sea-food Bouillabaisse of veal with garlic aspargus in herb cream sauce, Grilled Chicken with lemon and mushrooms, Malaysian Lamb Curry with cashew nuts and mango chutney.

For dessert, choose from assorted French pastries, Mini Cheesecake and others.

Dads who avail of the Manduriao Deli buffet get a 20-percent discount card from Rustan's Department Store. The lunch and dinner buffet costs P600++. Kids 12 years old and below get 50-percent off the buffet rate. The Manduriao Gourmet Café and Deli is on the first level of Greenbelt Mall.

Discounts and freebies for dads are also being offered at Arneta. Center's over 1,000 shops and food places. A P1,000 single-receipt purchase at any Arneta's establishment entitles dads to a free gift from Barber's. Gifts may be claimed from any promo booth in the center.

Mendrey and Artwork is holding a Father's Day sale at All Mall until June 17. Blue Magic 4F Mall presents an array of gifts for Dad, at Greenwich Fortune Plaza. Dad can get a free key chain or tong for every P800 purchase. He gets a Blade Auto Center cash coupon worth P200 when he dines at Super Bowl of China. All fathers get a free food sampler at Pizza Hut.

Pfizer and Watchfield will hold a Eye clinic for dads on Father's Day at All Mall, Fortune Plaza and Fortune Market. Dads will also get free consultation and gift items. Visit www.ayalamalls.com.

SPECIAL treats await dads at Arneta Center.

Authentic grand piano feel.
Built for your expressive playing.

DGX-620

YAMAHA

Available at Yamaha Music Stores and select Audio stores
www.yupangco.com

TOMMY Hilfiger Aeschna

STORM Rave Square Black

TOMMY Hilfiger Blackbird

Stunning timepieces

AGE, THE NEW TOMMY HILFIGER WATCH, is a combination of sports and chic.

A sparkling Swarovski crystal "T" is integrated into the watch design, embellishing the bracelet or strap where it attaches to the case. The white dial with minute track running along the outer edge is enhanced by a number of gunn's creases detailed with the Tommy Hilfiger logo and flag.

The brand is also registered on the stainless steel bezel, that is offered on a polished stainless steel bracelet accented by enamel center links in black, white and pink. It is also available in a leather strap.

The three watch, meanwhile, has a red dot that determines the hour while the revolving minute disc with the red arrow shows the minutes. This comes in either black or white dial, both with Storm logo with matching color straps shown.

Another movement is showcased in The sea watches, with the rotor-guide movement now gracing the popular PRIMO chronographs. It is an external chronograph display divided into 30 seconds, with the sweeping second hand marking auto-clock wise from 0 o'clock to return to 0 after automatically after a time lapse of two hours. High precision mineral watch coating edge design and exclusive technology marks the sports timepiece.

From Red Square to your wrist, Storm-Europe brings the finest in cosmetic innovation. The Storm Expedition series takes its inspiration from the Expedition Trophy, which is the longest winter off-road race in the world.

These watches are available in all Sy Centre, Gift Gate, SM Department Stores, Rustan's Department Stores, Landmark, 6750 Department Stores, Robinson's Department Stores and Rose Lifestyle.

APPETIME Kiwi Watch

TISSOT (236 KB)

ANDY Parlor Caution Watch

VOSTOK Expedition

STORM Energy Brown

You fill him with pride on father's day!

Whether celebrated simply or grandly,

It's more beautiful with a Red Ribbon

Exclusively available at Red Ribbon Bakeshop. Order now!

STRIVECTIN-SD Intensive Concentrate for Existing Stretch Marks (P4,700)

STRIVECTIN-SD Eye Cream (P4,650)

BEAUTY

Botox
the easy way

StriVectin-SD, originally formulated to help reduce stretch marks, also works wonders against facial wrinkles

I HAVE STRETCH MARKS. IF IT were because I'd given birth or because of sudden weight gain or loss, I probably wouldn't be so shocked.

Nobody warned me, though, about stretch marks due to puberty. All I remember was, before getting my period my thighs were so itchy that I kept scratching until my skin was all inflamed. I had five wounds.

My mom brought me to the dermatologist about three months after when the red lines had weakened and turned purple. We found out they were on their way to becoming stretch marks. (Some area no cure for them. The doctor did say they would get lighter through time. Like I really could!

I just wanted them to disappear. I still do. That's why when I heard about StriVectin-SD from a friend, I felt it was a Godsend. But the product wasn't available here yet.

Well, now it is!

I was so happy when I received an invitation for StriVectin-SD's launch in Manila. I was extremely surprised to find out that the treatment can also be applied on the face as a replacement for Botox, since according to Dr. Chevreux, the medical expert who introduced the product, "Topical creams offer gradual, continual results, while the effects of injections, facial peels and dermabrasion are tougher on the skin and more stiff."

I received the instant Botox I feel like I've hit two birds with one stone, because I was already seeing with the idea of getting Botox shots since I hit a certain age. But with StriVectin-SD, I'd get Botox-like results, but without injections.

StriVectin-SD was really formulated for stretch marks, but when samples were distributed some people started using it as a moisturizer aside from treating their stretch marks with it. They got good results either way, that's why StriVectin-SD now sports the tag, "The stretch mark cream turned anti-wrinkle phenomenon!"

KNOCKOUT! Pia Francisco-Prieto

Frequently asked questions

HOW DOES STRIVECTIN-SD WORK?

StriVectin-SD is a quick-absorbing, bio-functional topical formula originally developed to reduce the appearance of existing stretch marks. It includes a proprietary combination of skin-firming agents, elasticizers and skin hydrators. The wrinkle-reducing component is StriVectin-SD actually makes your skin

Milcu
Puff out that odor spot away!
POWDERED DEODORANT
TALCUM POWDER BRAND OF THE YEAR 2006
Watsons
MAGIC PUFF
Available at SM Supermarket, Watsons, Landmark, Big K, Rustan's Supermarket, Ever Gotesco, Mercury Drug and all leading Supermarkets and Drugstores nationwide.

Inquirer Beauty is giving away three StriVectin-SD Intensive Concentrate for Existing Stretch Marks and three Eye Creams. E-mail us at rbeauty@inquirer.com.ph and tell us why you deserve to win. The first six entries will bring home the prizes!

Frequently asked questions

From page 09

appear thicker and firmer.

How do I apply StriVectin-SD?

Begin with clean, dry skin. Apply three times a day every day if using on stretch marks. Apply twice a day every day if using on wrinkles. Do not exceed these applications per 24-hour period. Use sparingly (it is extremely concentrated). Massage a small amount of StriVectin-SD into the target area, using a circular motion, until completely absorbed.

How much StriVectin-SD do I need to use?

Since StriVectin-SD is extremely concentrated, a little goes a long way. Typically you need an amount equal to a dime to cover the facial area and about the size of a quarter when using StriVectin-SD on stretch marks. These sizes may vary depending on the area you are covering.

Where will I see the results?

In as little as 28 days, StriVectin-SD's proven, proprietary compounds will produce a visible reduction in the appearance of stretch marks (prominent because of either depth, length, discoloration and texture) and reduce the appearance of existing wrinkles.

Will StriVectin-SD help with old wrinkles/stretch marks?

Absolutely! StriVectin-SD can help no matter how long you've had your wrinkles/stretch marks—whether it's been 10 days or 10 years.

Can I use StriVectin-SD on the wrinkles/stretch marks/scars on my eyes?

The correct way to apply StriVectin-SD to the eye area is to softly massage it into the skin covering the orbital bone around the eyes. Do not apply StriVectin-SD directly underneath the eye or on top of the eyelid.

Can I use StriVectin-SD with other skin products?

StriVectin-SD may be used with virtually all other facial products. You may use a combination of skincare products on the inside of your forearm before applying them to your face. Of course, if you are using a prescription skincare product, we recommend your physician first. Remember, always apply StriVectin-SD first, then, if needed, you may apply a moisturizer or sunblock on top of it.

What were the results of the clinical trials?

The proprietary wrinkle-reducing compound StriVectin-SD was shown to improve the appearance of age spots and dark circles under the eye, and reduce the appearance of the actual length, depth, volume and surface area of stretch marks/wrinkles.

Can StriVectin-SD help with acne scars or other types of scarring?

No. Although StriVectin-SD was specifically formulated to help with the appearance of stretch marks (which are, after all, scars), many StriVectin-SD users have reported improvement in the appearance of acne scars, burn scars, chicken pox marks, scars from old injuries.

Will everyone see results?

Ninety-three percent of the subjects tested saw a dramatic difference in the appearance of their stretch marks.

Does StriVectin-SD work on all skin colors?

Yes.

Is StriVectin-SD safe?

StriVectin-SD has been proven to be safe and effective.

Available at Rustan's Shoemart and Alabang

PAGE 09: the world over agrees: it's a beauty must-try!

Slim down without the complications

My new favorite fat burner is called Green Tea, White Tea, Orange Tea Triple Fat Burner

Kirsty Xuales

SOME FACTS TO BEAR IN MIND:

Notice from me: food and environment are mostly fat-soluble, so they get stored in our fat cells.

These same toxins wear down our immune system, they make us retain water, bloat us, make us constipated, weaker as prone to pimples. We become fatter and acne-prone, we lose hair and become susceptible to infection.

When we go on a crash diet, we end up sick, acne-troubled, with bad breath, body odor, rashes and allergies. We have to cut to gain our strength back, ending up fatter than when we started.

Stress cuffles the immune system, allowing toxins and free radicals to take control of our systems.

Now, then, are we to lose more than 30 pounds without our face aging fast or our head going bald?

Fat burners

To continue your exercise program and diet by cutting down on carbohydrates, but you can help speed up the process with safe and effective fat burners, which help shed off the fat while supporting existing cell damage, preventing new ones from occurring, and eliminating excess water that causes bloating.

My new favorite fat burner is called Green Tea, White Tea, Orange Tea Triple Fat Burner (P880). It allows me to cut down on the number of supplements I take because it takes care of my weight loss, energy and antioxidant needs requirements.

One bottle has 30 gel tablets, but since you have to take at least two tablets a day, the serving size is cut down to 15. The gel capsule formula allows for faster and better absorption in the body, so the results quickly become visible and you actually absorb more of the potent ingredients.

Those who already have their own green tea fat burning tablets that work need not buy this product. However, readers who have been cleared by doctors of any hormonal imbalance but still cannot lose weights fast enough with other tablets can try this one.

I take one tablet with my first two meals. Others take two, but I avoid taking it after 1 p.m. because the caffeine prevents me from sleeping at night.

Other supplements

The only other supplements I take are digestive enzyme tablets—either Lifetime Complete Enzyme (P800/90 tabs) or Nature's Secret Liquid Gel enzymes (3rd gel caps/P1,400). I take them with lunch and dinner to help my body digest carbohydrates, fat and protein better. I usually wake up with a flatter stomach. Lifetime tablets are used by cancer patients to help them digest, so they are strong enough even if they aren't to get fatter.

The other supplement I drink on a daily basis is Acidophilus Probiotic. It contains good bacteria which works against the bad bacteria in our system. Bad bacteria cause bloating, bad breath, constipation or diarrhea, acne, allergies, rashes, yeast infection and bad gas. When you get sick in the system also cannot increase sugar cravings, itching and weight gain.

I take either Lifetime's Acidophilus 5 billion bacteria (P1,400) or 80 Ultimate Probiotic 4 billion (P1,800) just once a day on an empty stomach, or 30 minutes before lunch or dinner. Research says we need five to 10 billion probiotic bacteria a day to keep our internal tract healthy and our immune system up.

Those who love Yakult and yogurt may not need to take Probiotics because the former are rich in live good bacteria. If you are prone to developing white coating on your tongue, **most likely you have bad breath (but don't know it).**

I usually open a capsule and apply the contents on my tongue, letting them dissolve there so good bacteria can overpower the bad and neutralize any odor. The contents taste like lemon or wheat, so you won't gag on them. Of course, do not forget to floss and brush your teeth afterwards.

Probiotics, aside from pre-natal vitamins, are the only other supplements expectant mothers are encouraged to take. They represent one of the most important ingredients of **breast milk, which helps the baby's immune system.**

I buy my supplements at Health Express. Otherwise because I have a 20- to 25-percent member's discount on the sticker price. But I have seen these products in other health stores.

Visit www.healthexpressph.com

Every issue of the Inquirer is already made from 100% recycled paper. But if every Inquirer reader recycled their newspapers for one year, we would all save an additional 3.4 million trees, 840 million kilowatt hours of energy, and 78 million gallons of oil. Support the PDI NewsPaper Drive and help save the environment. For Metro Manila pick-ups, call Carpel at 435-0656 /435-0411, Laguna area at 897-4986 local 2126, Cebu at (032)232-0259, and Davao at (082)244-1711.

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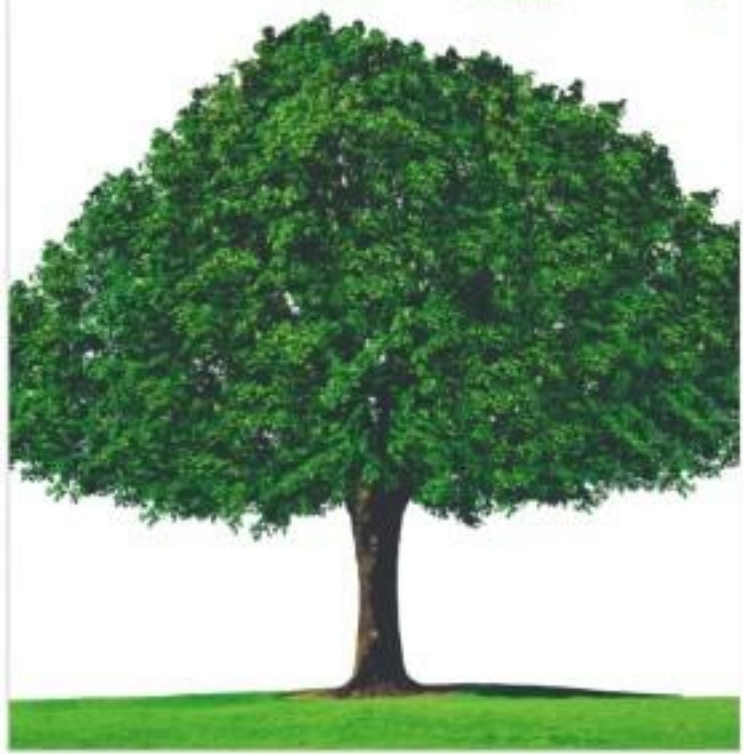
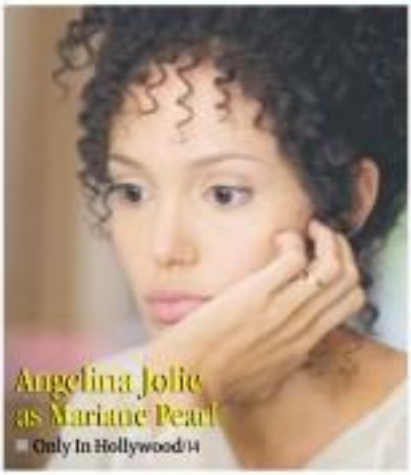


ENTERTAINMENT

Edited by Bonnie G. Velarde



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Oh, those beautiful,

By the Inquirer Entertainment Staff

SO WE WERE DRIVING ALONG EDSA ON SUNday and suddenly it struck us: Four of those beautiful women on the billboards have figured in various happy situations in the recent past. (Dawn Zulueta's "moment of temptation", Kris Aquino's "are all know what happened), Bea's Centerfold (we don't exactly know what's happening), Gretchen Barretto [what was that about?].

Note that they're all endorsers of the same brand of shampoo. (Who was ahead of the curve on this?) Only one other image needed to show that hair product doesn't lead to fight of control or scandal of late. Good job to the Angel Against!

Taking the rap

This is a statement from John Estrada, on his airconditing snapshots with Gretchen Barretto:

I didn't want to talk. I did not want to give any explanation to those malicious minds that deliberately posted the photos on the Internet.

But I believe that many feelings have been hurt (in all this, and I take the responsibility to set things right. I am taking the blame.

The photos were from my cell phone. It was a thoughtless moment and bad judgment to even take those photos. I never released, nor gave anyone permission, nor even authorized them.

I am not using as an excuse a night of partying and drinking, but, really, we were all good friends there, celebrating a birthday surprise party. The time began there and ended there.

IZA CALZADO

Rushes

Not well

Speaking of Gretchen, we

Malakda how she was doing

Dr. She is not well."

He asked Dengdet

Quiboloy how his father

John was

Dengdet answers: "Spiritu-

mama ejoung

Amerayan."

Do you?

Asked whether

Gretchen Barretto mis-

reddens enough to get

photographed kissing

a man other than her

partner Tony Boy Gu-

tiongco, sir Gretchen

done to the intagal

didn't have to know.

told the cast: "Do you th

Hey easy.

Loose lips sink ships

Two new anchors got a

after violating the confidenti

rants.

Turned out, the two alleg

guys, been conflicting rep

Instead. ("The boss trusted Ba

the press.)

The reason that one gir

ten anchors. Turds ate sup

Fallen franchise

MTRCB's "Philippines' Nex

is hemorrhaging to the tune

A network executive said

of the academy."

Faltering network

A TV network is last in

sighed, "If the owner could

will first killing filing, we could

Not so sweet

After child stars grow

THE RECENT LEGAL AND CA

over arrest of Lindsay Lohan have

cast the spotlight more on what

happens to child stars after they

grow up. Lohan had a glamorous

career acting in roles for movies

whose she was a child performer,

her teen debut she's a young woma

ist, she's hosting a hard time get

ting her act together as a film pro

fessional.

Last year, a producer wrote her

a remake letters accusing her of be

having the cause of delay in the movie

They were shooting, due to her

late night carousing and other in

stances of unprofessional behav

ior. More recently, she wrecked the

car she was driving and more im

portant, she really got a pulp on her

psychological problems.

Which leads some (the bulk) to

wonder if there's anything inher

ent in the psyche of a child star

that generally results in "trouble"

after he or she has become an

adult.

They point to the nights when

child talents don't sleep while

shooting, the adult computer

these children keep, the show biz

ethic that "the show must go on"

culture" everything they see and

do—even the hot lights used in

filming, which they suspect of

exacting young tenders' physical

grounds!

It's true enough, quite a number

of former child stars tend to be

come prime adults—Shirley

Temple, Mickey Rooney, Natal

ie Wood, Elizabeth Taylor and

Judy Garland—and, hardly Vi

vian Vanessa, Aiza Seguerra

and Heaven Jiminez.

There are really tall exceptions

like Ian Veneracion, but they

tend to be the exceptions that

prove the Lilliputian theory.

Psychologically, some ex-child

stars have also come off much the

worse for wear, as in the classic

case of Judy Garland, who turns

out to have been a victim of her

own success as a singing moppet.

There was her self-Judy never see

how making one hit movie after

another that her studio lends her

sacrifice appears as she could

start losing hours, shot take down

sex she would hold among right

away! The shooting drug can

trade Judy a big price, and she

Viewfinder

Nestor U. Torre

never really recovered from that

addiction regimen until she died.

On the other hand, Shirley

Temple ended up as the US Am

bassador to the French

tions—so, a dismal outcome a lo

ser means ennually predictable

to local show business, Willie

Wahlbeck has fond his share of ch

fanfare as a young adult, Jean Vil

lanueva, show presenter of

Batangas. So, the same archetypal

dynamic

VILMA SANTOS

NINO MUHLACH

...troubled women on the billboards

JOHN ESTRADA

...studies.'

Pops, mulled!

Now that Ara Mina stayed at singer Martin Nievera's house in Las Vegas for a few days last month, apparently gay co-stars Pops Fernandez really mulled. It's about time with bebot co-stars, the singer's once with Pops. Pops is currently dating Jennett Flores, their co-

Me, a step-mom?

Rico Puno's on her previous relationship with Bernard Palanca: "Never kung naisip ang sarili ko na magging ina ng anak ni Ke." They were sweethearts longer (years) than Bernard was married to Sheryll Soriano. How morbid. Mmy it's pregnant with KZ's child.

Richard Gutierrez of America

The short list for the Richard Gutierrez role in "The Ides," a.k.a. the Hollywood remake of "Shake," included no Dean until we said a Senate heroes could award win.

A source said Ryan Phillipe and Mark Salzberg read and liked the script, but the lead role eventually went to Jesse Bradford. Phillipe's co-star in "Days of Our Fathers." (See Only in Hollywood, page 28.)

Several A-list actresses are reportedly vying for the lead female part, originated by Angel Locsin.

Funny thing is, while Angel and Richard were more unanimous for the Hollywood remake, Jim Caloocan is still in the running for the Sanford edit role.

Raymond to IC: Sorry

Raymond Gutierrez reportedly apologized to IC Bonoan about the ongoing word war between the mother standoffs Sana such as Ara Mina, Angelica Panganiban, and IC's mom, journalist Dolly Anne Carvajal.

Deadly cast

Filming of the indie film "Tuhog" was delayed twice, first because one of the actors got stabbed, and again when another actor went in jail. "Tuhog" stars are real gang members in Manila.

That's Robin

Some Buffalo trust trustworthy treasurers relish dishing "Imus Treasurers!" He doesn't. Blink. Inhale. "Yung mga kasing senora nanon si Angel." Stone stand for death-defying stunts.

Eyewitness

While watching daughter Bella Cunanan's interview on the show biz talk program "Star Talk," an eyewitness says a star dropped "from the right eye" of the Cunanan patriarch, Eddie.

Brokeback Bruce

Bruce Willis said Tuesday in Tokyo he was thrilled to still be acting at age 52, in the film "Die Hard 4.0." AP

Bruce Willis looks fresh into action. AP

Never bear in love

Original "Survivor: Edit" Jolly Cardona: "I have never used the words 'I love you' to anyone in a romantic relationship. Ever." AP

No longer cute

Ann Curtis says she is done with her "dumb" act. "It's 20 years old, and that act is no longer cute." AP

ANGEL AQUINO

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STA. ROSA

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LIPA

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DASMARINAS

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TRANSFORMERS

Angelina Jolie talks about Brad, her mom's passing and her rift with dad

LOS ANGELES—YAM LARMAN CONFERRED with us that Jesse Bradford, who starred in Clint Eastwood's "Flags of Our Fathers," has the opposite in the US remake of the thriller "Sigawa."

But first here's D.L.A.rious Ayer (no computer) the movie, to be titled "The Echo," for production. He told us via e-mail: "We came up with names. Jesse Bradford was unanimously selected. He read the script and liked the character a lot. He asked to see the original and he fell in love with it. Jesse and I had lunch with the producers at the Ammo Cafe in Hollywood. We talked non-stop about the script and his character. I saw

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Robert U. Nepales

WITH Dan Futterman, who plays Daniel Pilot's father Mathew, in "A Mighty Heart"

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JESSE BRADFORD

...and Yam Larmanas casts 'Flags of Our Fathers' star Jesse Bradford in US remake of 'Sigaw'

here excited because."

Pia Filipino filmmaker, who has the privilege of directing The Hollywood version of his acclaimed horror film, added, "Jesse is now working out daily—undergoing weight training. He has a nutritionist to help him level up for the on-cam role. We will definitely see a different Jesse Bradford in "The Echo."

"Jesse mentioned, "We have been coming soon, crisp for the past of the time. It's fun to see a lot of very good actors and actresses coming in to audition. Hahahahmen kept saddles for long-ish at TV-at-ons, tapes matched-pair for for set-audition. Our casting director is Nancy Bar-Kaufman ("The Grudge," "Pay Emerson of Emily Rose," Road Trip"). The is just amazing! She's working with an associate we Nancy has been and raised in Chicago, for some in John Baths and her family in from La Union. John is a very talented actress ("Pearls Dreads Love," Shattered Glass"). When you work with Nancy, you get to discuss from top agencies like CTB, HBBBO, CAA, etc."

And more: "We hope to look all other actors by early next month. I'm flying out to Toronto on June 10 to start prep for the Aug. 13 start date of filming. We moved the shoot to Toronto from New York so we can have more shooting days, about 90 per cent of the movie will be shot inside a stage/studio."

A news story of Jesse's casting, titled "Bradford Stars in Gripping 'Echo,'" landed on the front page of The Hollywood Reporter.

Carabao-girl

"I blame all of you for that because I miss you," Angelina Jolie told our press group with a laugh when a reporter of some publication of her former fan carabao girl she came out, who jumped into the pool after she won a fold-on Globe Best Supporting Actress for "Girl, Interrupted" in 1999.

"I think I'm really the same person," maintained the actress who turns 32 in the month. Having just turned 30 in the recent press con at the Beverly Hilton, she was given a bouquet of flowers.

Angelina is not quite that same girl who plunged into the Beverly Hilton's pool in a crowded gown. Since then, she has become a Goodwill Ambassador for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and, with a passion to aid countries devastated by war and poverty, has adopted kids from several the world—Maddox (nicknamed Mudd), 5, Pakaew (Pax), 3, and Zahara (Zaha), 1, with her partner, Brad Pitt.

What for 11-month-old youngest is that Angelina commutes to its co-caroliner actress. The actress' portrayal of Marianne Pearl, widow of slain journalist Daniel "Danny" Pearl, in "A Mighty Heart," was praised by critics when the film premiered at the Cannes Film Festival last month.

At the Cannes press con for the movie which we attended, Angelina was a forthright interviewee as usual. But in this recent one, where it was more relaxed and we had her for slightly over an hour, she talked more openly for the first time. She did not shirk when asked about the issues pointing of her mother, Marcheline Bertrand; how he is doing; the rift with her father, actor John Voight; and how Brad was as her pregnancy in "A Mighty Heart" and as her partner.

There was a catch to her visit—as she mentioned Watcher-ite. She spoke about John in a hopeful tone. She squarely answered a question about her two-year Maine-Dave days. For the Indelibleites read, it, a female colleague supplied in the info: Angelina went to college Bhutanese culture. Armed empire-waisted black cocktail dress and black bright-hued high heels and toted a Bobo tote bag.

How is Brad as grandpaw and as a partner?

I'm a very lucky woman. I have a beautiful family and Brad is a very supportive friend, man and a great father ... and very romantic in his own way for me with the film. I was very nervous because I got to know Mariane and so many things about her. And then having someone by my side as the producer and, in some ways, sound like a good idea but it can also make the pressure higher. I had sleep-over it. But he was very helpful.

Do you and Brad have different ideas about parenting?

We're very similar. We both each other as parents. There is no divide like daddy's nice with this but mommy's not. We never want the kids to run or divided on the way we discipline. He's just as affectionate and loving as I am. I am just as playful. They ride motorcycles and do boy things more than I do. They get dirty in the mud. But are we to make sure they know that they don't divide manners and decks, that we agree, we're together, we love each other and from there we have a family.

How does Brad help you in difficult times?

It's funny to give all his sweets away. He's really a great friend ... If he's acting with me and nothing hurt I feel, I feel like he really wants to know. He really cares. We talk very deeply about everything. When my mom passed away, he sat with me ... and helped me through all the stages of handling it—what to deal with, but unless everything. He was just wonderful to my brothers. I wasn't thinking clearly. He spent the night talking to questions about our mom. He got us to tell funny stories about her, got us focused on all the love and the joy we were because enough others. He's extraordinary.

How is Pax adjusting to his new family?

He's a great kid. At first, we thought he was shy and quiet. Two days later at home, we discovered that he is the loudest member of the family. He is very athletic, very bold. We don't know if it's because he suddenly had [more brothers and sisters] that he never had before. He will have a Vietnamese person around on occasion so he doesn't forget his culture. And I'm also an woman is coming to visit Mudd. Pax and Zee have connected because they've been in age. Mudd and Pax are brothers, there are times when they absolutely bond against everybody else in the family. They're a tough team. Then they have moments when they bug each other—quite normal.

I'm really proud of Pax. You see certain things from somebody who has been institutionalized ... babies. It's quite obvious that he was used to a stronger discipline. It's hard to change that ...as he as strong [but] as just push him with love, by talking to him.

How are Brad's parents with the kids? Do you sometimes leave the kids with them?

Brad's parents are very kind to me, very warm. They're great grandparents. It's very important to me that the kids have that. I don't know if 50 hours there four with anybody right now (laughter). They're a wild bunch. When I first met [Brad's parents], I was coming in with two adopted children from other countries. They may term for them that they're equally loving. We've left the kids with them quite a few times.

How is your relationship with your father?

I hope that, in the future, it will be more private. Unfortunately our differences become very public—it was not started by me. At the end of the day we both made the best we each other. We will try to start communicating in some ways. We have communicated brought her son. She'll see how far we can go where it's healthy for both of us. I am sure we keep on on on on both.

You are on this. Is there a lot of pressure on actresses to be thin?

The funny thing is, when somebody says, you're thin, a person says, thank you. In the actually, when somebody says I'm thin, it is not a compliment. It's not something I want to be. I have [about my look].

This year, I lose my mom. I've gone through a lot. I have four kids. I just finished [crazy] filming. It's been hard to get my nutrition back on track and learn about my body after birth. I am doing the best I can. The thing that's disturbing is that instead of somebody saying, oh, this looks like somebody who is dealing with something from emotion—it's, do they want to be into skinny jeans? I don't wanna age young girls to be me this. I do want people to understand that I am just trying to work through a very difficult year.

(To be continued on Sunday.)

E-mail the columnist or reporter 5500@inq.net.com and watch his blog, "The Inquirer Report," on www.inquirerblogger.net/inquirerreport.

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OCEAN'S THIRTEEN

LIVING Stars

Editor Bernie G. Velarde

INSIDE

Mark Herras' favorite nook /J2

Rita Iringan's pet Shih Tzu /J2

SHARM has installed a sofa bed in the back of her van, so that she can doze off between rides.

A van of vanities

ON THE ROAD

THE THIS EXISTS VAN IS PRETTY SELF-contained. There's a sofa bed for resting and portable DVD player, plus a roomy MacBook to keep her occupied between rides. The spacious van is perfect because adventure Sharm Magbanua never met a month light. "I bring everything. Good thing it's spacious!" She lugs along lots of costumes, shoes, bags, locks, hangers, and various accessories. She sums up her fashion philosophy in one word: Comfort. Page J4

SHE SURFS the net on her MacBook. These days, she's reading up on Europe.

Book lover's dream bind

By Marinel Cruz
Photos by Angee dela Cruz

BOUND opened in 2004, with only the books she and three partners donated.

"IT'S JUST UP A bookstore to every book lover's dream. If only to be around books, I guess," said ABS-CBN author personal and TV host Bernadette Sembrano.

Me? I'm one corner of the bookstore aptly called Bound.

The store offers previously owned books on parenting, memoirs, current affairs, among others. Bound also sells new age, inspirational books and books for kids.

HOBBIES

Donated

"It started with only the books we donated," Bernadette told Living Stars. By "we," she means her best friends—journalist Inday Varona-Espina, Carina Conde and psychologist May Rodriguez. "Here we're selling books donated by our customers, too."

Ms B said a portion of the income generated from Bound goes to the bookstore's

CONTINUED ON PAGE J2

"ENCOURAGING others to read is people-empowerment," says Ms B.

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MARK HERRAS

MY FAVORITE NOOK IS MY BIG bedroom. I have everything I need here. There's a television set, iPod, personal computer, Xbox, even a mini-refrigerator. I don't need to leave this room to get food and drinks. I also displayed all my favorite things—my collection of vases, trophies and action figures...here. When I don't leave work, I spend the whole day in front of the PC—playing online games and downloading music and movies in my video iPod. Computer games are addicting. I need to spend 12 hours to an Internet cafe. Good thing I now have Internet connection at home.

Callalily s... new mus...

THE BOYS OF CALLALILY, Ojeanes, Aiden Arceo, singles, Gabriel Richie Kaufmann...shot for re... ing, the making of th... (Star) BIBO music vide... James Deleon in Quezon directed by Benito Es... produced by Chris Cal... story.

Kiddie Jamboree

LAST MONTH, JOLLIBEE KIDS CLUB members had a field day playing games, watching celebrity performances and joining with mascots at the Jollibee Jamboree at the Mezzo Hall of the SM Mall of Asia.

Sisi Jimenez and Lito Marcelo hosted a show of songs and dances. Performers included Sarah Geronimo, Sam Milby and the "Little Big Star" winners. Jim Otto and Gerald Anderson came to personally greet the kids.

Concept store

Shoebox celebrity endorsers were joined by shoe aficionados when the footwear brand recently inaugurated its concept store at level 302 of TriNoma Mall at North Avenue in Quezon City.

The launch was highlighted by a mini-concert at the mall's activity center, featuring performers MYMP and Rachel Alejandro.

Rachel is a Shoebox endorser herself, along with youth icon Adrian Ilagan, its current endorser, and pop princesses Britney Spears and Christina Aguilera and American idol Carrie Underwood.

RITA IRINGAN

MY MOM TOLD ME... was a gift from my uncle after I won (in grand championship) an "Eye Size Baby." Every time I'm in the mall, I buy one or two items, clips, pins and accessories for her. I took her to church last holiday season and she was blessed by the priest. I also helped a police... Ribay's New Year costume. Once a month, we have her groomed in Under the Sea, the shop owned by [composer] Ito Consuelo (Tito). Ribay sometimes...

Book lover's ...

United Union of Journalists in the Philippines, a group that actively protects the interest of the families of slain journalists.

Advocacy

"I really don't know if journalists should venture into business. This is actually more of an advocacy. We want to make reading more affordable," said Bernardino, who is also boss of the Gaisano... says these "fragmentated,

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Shaina in motion

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Augusto de la Cruz

FOR TEEN STAR SHAINA MAGDAYAO, FIFteen, a Toyota Grandia 2006, is a dressing room on wheels.

"Using everything," she says.

And I believe her.

She adds: "Soap, shampoo, towel, rubbing alcohol, cuke nails (cheese dipper)."

Her overnight bag is big enough to accommodate all her stuff. "It's not just for gowns (being stylish), a bag should be practical."

Her glam beyond Entertainment Living Stars a peek into her hefty Cole Haan carry: there's a wallet, perfume bottle, plantex, hairbrush, digital camera, two cell phones, and a Kikay kit.

Ah, the kikay kit....

"I can survive hours home without my rosary, earbuds, lip balm, lip gloss, tweezers, and the essential makeup products," she says.

Also in the kit is the three Necessity Whitening collection, of which she is the latest endorser.

"I use the complete line—toner, cleanser, day cream. It's important to use a moisturizer—especially since I'm required to wear lots of makeup at work," she points out.

She also lugs along plastic containers of shoes, accessories (hats and lots of belts, bangles and bracelets) and costumes for her different shows like commitments.

"The whole third row of the van is filled with clothes," she says.

Over 20 pairs of shoes can fit in one plastic container.

"I bring different pairs every time. And I am silly wear brown or black Zara boots for the 2PM dance practices on Monday mornings during A.S.K.P.," she says.

Good thing the fa'ncite is spacious: "That's why I chose the vehicle."

For her 18th birthday though, she is craving for latest Honda CR-V. "The CRV will be for fun; the van...for work."

The van is also a bedroom on wheels.

"I had the seats in the last row removed and had a mini bed installed," she says. The bed is got to good use, she says, whenever she has marathon, pa-marinipat, out-of-town shoots.

"We usually shoot in Batangas(on the Jabberwock series) 'Bonita,' traveling from Manila to Biñan can be tiring. Between takes, I rest and watch movies and TV shows on the portable DVD player," she explains.

Among her last 10 shoes are "Dar Yee Hill," "Grey's Anatomy" and "Sex and the City."

"(My best friend) Bea (Alonzo) and I just started watching 'Sex and the City.' When we were younger, we didn't get the jokes. But now we're hooked," she quips.

Her MacBook is a dependable companion on the road.

Shaina's the computer whiz in the family and big sister Nina Morales uses it on her for help because "she needed to e-mail someone."

Those days, she often surfs the Net, researching on Europe.

"Where Bea (turning 18, are were to Singapore. For my 18th birthday (on Nov 6), we are planning to tour Europe. It will be my first time so I want to visit Paris, Amsterdam, Paris."

Home network MEG-CBN is keen on recruiting a pretty coming-out party for her.

"But I don't seem it to be traditional. Studying formal or stiff for me. I want my debut to be fun and unique."

She's a potential girl, after all.

"It's unreasonable to spend P1.5 million on a party that will only last one night. I'd rather travel to Europe and enjoy memories of the trip forever."

TOYOTA Grandia van is a dressing bedroom on wheels for Shaina.

ON THE ROAD

TEEN star chose his van, the kids stared at the back of the van.

LINGER her "feet" are plastic containers filled with belts, accessories and shoes.

COLE Haan bag can carry two cell phones, a digital camera, wallet, hairbrush and kikay kit in one pocket.

Constantly rushing from one set to another, the teen star says everything she needs is in this grey van

WHAT'S in her kikay kit? Beauty essentials and her rosary.

SHE IS partial to Mango and Kenneth Cole accessories because they're stylish and durable.

OVER 20 pairs of shoes are stored in the plastic container—a favorite brand is Mine Wind.